

## Memorandum

**To:** Leadership et al.  
**From:** Anthony Kukura  
**Date:** December 9, 2025  
**Subject:** Governmental Relations Year in Review- 2025

### Section I: Executive Summary

This year has been one of the most challenging periods for policy work in recent memory, demanding constant adaptability and agility amid extraordinary headwinds at both the state and federal levels. Despite these obstacles, every available tool was leveraged to maintain engagement in the process, even when the environment required us to take a defensive posture.

When opportunities arose to take the offensive, the organization seized them, avoiding worst-case scenarios at the federal level and limiting the impact on operations to less than 2%. At the state level, funding was held flat at historic levels set by the 2023 operating budget, even as other Medicaid-funded services faced cuts. Outreach efforts have been robust, with over 90 meetings with elected officials on track before year's end, and the Boundless Advocates group has grown to nearly 150 members, collectively generating more than 530 touchpoints with leaders. These achievements have positioned the team well to continue engaging at both state and federal levels.

In a climate where change is the only constant, the highest priority remains to adapt, learn, and pivot as organizational growth continues.

### Section II: A Year in Review, 2025 Statistics and Achievements

Throughout 2025, the GR team engaged in a variety of activities that further advanced our policy goals:

- 157+ hours spent directly advocating for our services with elected leaders and governmental officials, a 55% increase from 2024\*
- 34+ hours spent lobbying for our services and policy goals with elected leaders, a 147% increase over 2024\*
- 46+ additional people recruited to join our Boundless Advocates grassroots advocacy group, a 46% increase in membership from 2024\*
- 530+ grassroots advocacy touchpoints with elected leaders generated via our Boundless Advocates network\*
- 89+ meetings with government officials and elected leaders, a 21% increase over 2024\*
- 12+ testimonies submitted to key Statehouse Committees\*
- 9+ meetings with major metros and counties within Ohio

- Our Boundless Advocates Advocacy Group was recognized at Boundless's 2025 Volunteer Appreciation Event in October 2025
- Establishment of a Boundless led OhioRISE Advocacy Coalition in October 2025
 

\*All these numbers will continue to grow as we move throughout the end of this year; we have several activities planned for December with elected leaders. Boundless Advocates recruitment will continue as well.

## Section III: Looking Ahead, Political Dynamics and Expectations for 2026

- **Local Level Dynamics**
  - Boundless will continue our efforts to engage and partner with local leaders in the major metropolitan areas and counties where we provide services.
  - Additional opportunities for engagement with key cities, counties, and community groups will be sought that align with Boundless's growth throughout Ohio.
  - While 2025 was a key local election year for the majority of Ohio, 2026 will feature several key elections in Ohio's major metros and counties. Boundless will monitor these elections and develop an engagement strategy accordingly.
- **State Level Dynamics**
  - 2026 will be the final year of Gov. Mike DeWine's tenure in office, meaning the 2026 Midterm election will determine Ohio's next Governor. While we will not know for certain who the final slate of candidate will be until after the May 2026 Primary Elections, the two leading candidates now are Vivek Ramaswamy (R) and Amy Acton (D). As we move into 2026, the GR team will begin to review available data and prepare multiple plausible 2026 election scenarios. This will ensure Boundless is best prepared for a new gubernatorial Administration.
  - The next Governor is not the only item that will be decided in November of 2026; all members of the Ohio House of Representatives and one half the members of the Ohio Senate will also be on the ballot. Boundless will prioritize engagement with members next year who are running for reelection or not up for reelection. Additional focus will be given to members that are expected to hold key positions in the next session of the General Assembly beginning in January of 2027 (chamber leadership, caucus leadership, committee chairs, vice chairs, and ranking members).
  - While the 2026 election will be a major event next year, there are still priorities Boundless aims to advocate for in the final year of Gov. DeWine's administration. Some of these initiatives include: OhioRISE Advocacy and Education, ABA funding changes/ improvements, legislation addressing supported decision making, and 14c Reform efforts. It is our aim that movement can be made on several of these initiatives prior to the end of the Governor's term and the end of the current session of the General Assembly.
- **Federal Level Dynamics**
  - Much like the state level, the 2026 Midterm Elections will have a major impact on our federal level work as well. Ohioans will see a special election for the U.S. Senate at the top of the ticket in 2026. Sen. Jon Husted (R), who was appointed to this seat following Senator JD Vance's resignation prior to taking office as Vice President. Sen. Husted is now seeking election to serve out the remainder of that term, which ends January 3, 2029. His leading challenger is

- currently former Senator Sherrod Brown (D).
- In addition to the US Senate election, all 15 of Ohio's US Representative's will be up for reelection in 2026. Currently, all 15 members have filed to run for reelection to their seats. The General Assembly approved a new U.S. congressional district map for use in 2026, which made several small alterations to the map used in 2022 and 2024.
- Until the 2026 election is decided, at the Federal level next year, the Republican Party will continue to hold a trifecta in Washington DC.
- There is currently no discussion of Congress or the President attempting to work on or push through another major legislative package, like the reconciliation package passed in July of this year.
- Our advocacy goals at the Federal level will continue to focus on educating members on the unique services we provide, and that our population occupies a unique corner of the healthcare area. Our concerns over the yet to be seen implications of the reconciliation package will be relayed to offices throughout the next year. Boundless will continue to advocate for legislative to create a standard occupational classification for our DSPs, reform the 988 crisis call center line, eliminate unfunded mandates for Medicaid funded services, and in the long term look to continue to establish relationships for potential line-item funding initiatives, and establish new champions for Medicaid/ HCBS, and behavioral health services.
- With the addition of a federal lobbying firm that will represent Boundless exclusively, our focus on Federal Community Project funding will intensify next year, especially if we believe that the 2026 election will result in a change of congressional control.