



HEALTH POLICY COUNCIL CALL MINUTES

Date Wednesday, January 6, 2021
Time 12 p.m. CT

MEMBERS	
Joanna Buscemi, PhD (Chair)	Marian Fitzgibbon, PhD
Melanie Bean, PhD	Carly Goldstein, PhD (CPEC Chair)
Pamela Behrman, PhD	Brian Gonzalez, PhD
Michelle Cardel, PhD, MS, RD, FTOS	Amy Janke, PhD (SPLC Chair)
Akilah Dulin, PhD (Health Policy Committee Chair)	Leo Wilton, PhD, MPH

Approve minutes from October call

Dr. Buscemi made motion to approve the minutes from the October call; seconded by Dr. Gonzalez. The motion carried.

Ambassador Update

Dr. Buscemi noted that there was not much of an update for the ambassadors. She reminded the council that each ambassador held their initial meetings from September to October, and then had a strategic break due to the election. The ambassadors would also hold quarterly meetings together on zoom to check-in and hold one another accountable. The council would know next steps to take with the ambassadors once committee appointments had been made.

→ **ACTION ITEM:** SBM Staff to follow up with Dr. Buscemi after committee appointments had been confirmed to find new ways to expand the ambassador program.

Update on Health Policy Brief Submissions from Ambassadors for Future Talking Points

Dr. Buscemi remarked that the ambassadors had kept busy drafting new health policy position statements that could be used to develop new talking points. The child nutrition ambassadors had worked to develop a brief on food and diet quality. The opioid pain ambassadors were working to draft an opioid-specific statement, as committees are more focused on substance use. The rural health ambassadors would use the brief that had already been drafted by Dr. Berhman to develop additional talking points.

→ **ACTION ITEM:** Complete rural health talking points.

→ **ACTION ITEM:** Complete child nutrition briefs.



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Update on Collaborating with Policy Organizations

Dr. Buscemi noted that there was some movement on the collaborations with other organizations.

Child Nutrition: Dr. Buscemi was speaking on a call for NOPREN on Friday, January 15. The council recommended that Dr. Buscemi discuss what the council does, how the council works together, as well as provide deliverables and opportunities to get involved. Ms. Bullock recommended that Dr. Buscemi add the relevant links to the chat feature after her virtual presentation was completed.

Rural Health: SBM representatives had met with the director of the Rural Policy Research Institute. However, this organization was careful not to get involved in politics, and only provided relevant data when asked. They do work with two groups that are more relevant (NOSORH and NRHA).

Pain/Opioid: When SBM representatives had met with the American Physical Therapy Association, they had discussed collaborating on a joint brief. The organization was also in the process of creating their strategic plan, and was dependent on the administration to proceed. The council would follow back up and reconvene.

→ **ACTION ITEM**: Follow up with American Physical Therapy Association.

Review of Election Results for Ambassador Legislators and Selection of New Ambassador for AL

Dr. Buscemi mentioned that Rep. Marcia Fudge had been appointed as HUD Secretary by Biden. It was noted by the council that it may be beneficial to have a working relationship with a legislator at HUD. There was potential that Rep. Fudge may delegate to a more appropriate party. However, HUD was also concerned with matters like food deserts. It was determined that the council would continue this relationship for now, and would be more strategic with communications, especially regarding scientific awareness and literacy.

Sen. Doug Jones had also lost his reelection bid. However, his ambassador, Dr. Tiffany Carson, had taken on a new position at Moffitt in FL. Dr. Buscemi stated that she could be moved to a Senator in FL, like Sen. Kathy Castor. While Sen. Castor was not a chair on the relevant committees, she was passionate about the right issues. Further, Dr. Carson was already a trained ambassador, and the council was remiss to lose her. The council noted that she could also be added to the council, but keeping her as an ambassador was in-line with the goal of expanding the ambassador program. The council could then find a University of Alabama – Birmingham recommendation for AL that could build a relationship with Rep. Sewell.



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→**ACTION ITEM:** After additional research on Rep. Kathy Castor, reconnect with Dr. Carson to see if she would like to continue as an ambassador.

The council also noted that they could begin planning at the local level as well as the federal and state level. The council could lean on ambassadors to include items on the next stimulus.

Adjourn

With no further business, the meeting was adjourned at 1:00 pm CT. *Minutes respectfully submitted by R. Borzon on January 11, 2021.*