



## **Go Learn Network Introduces Corcoran & Johnston Government Relations**

*June 2019*

Go Learn Network welcomed Corcoran & Johnston Government Relations as its new lobbying firm prior to the start of the 2019 Legislative Session in March. Founded in 2001, Corcoran & Johnston is a full-service governmental affairs firm with expertise in all areas of state and local government. The team has more than 85 years of combined legislative, executive, and regulatory knowledge and experience. They have been recognized as one of Florida's top lobbying firms by *Florida Trend Magazine* and ranked in the top Florida Lobbyists by *Sunshine State News*.

During the 2019 Legislative Session, three bills were introduced which would have strictly limited online continuing education courses for chiropractors to only 10 hours, of the 40 hours required by State law. Go Learn Network supports "doctor's choice," recognizing that chiropractors in Florida should have the flexibility to choose if continuing education classes are taken online or in-person, much like medical physicians and dental peers. Placing the limitation of 10 hours into law, would make it almost impossible to change in the future, limiting the growth of innovative and accessible educational options to the chiropractic profession for years to come.

SB 188 and HB 7031, both relating to the Department of Health, included this detrimental limitation on online continuing education hours. Prior to the start of the Legislative Session, both bills had been agreed on by both the Speaker of the House and the Senate President. Not only did this make the bills nearly untouchable to any amendment that was not simply technical in nature, but it almost guaranteed the bills would pass the Legislature and go to the Governor for signature.

The Corcoran & Johnston team immediately began work advocating against the continuing education language included within the bill. This work included meetings with House and Senate healthcare leadership, and their respective committee staff members, as well as exhaustive conversations with the Governor's office. In a significant victory, the 10 hour limitation for online continuing education was stripped from both SB 188 and HB 7031 in the only substantive policy amendment made to either bill.

SB 1078 was the third bill which contained the harmful 10 hour limitation language. The primary substance of this bill related to chiropractic physicians' ability to administer articles of natural origin, such as vitamins. Early on in the Legislative Session, Corcoran & Johnston met with the bill's sponsor and advocated against any kind of limitation to online continuing education. As a result, the bill sponsor committed to not pursuing the legislation and SB 1078 never received a single committee hearing. At the end of the 2019 Legislative Session, every bill that contained the harmful continuing education language was either killed or amended, preserving Go Learn Network's ability to pursue both statutory and regulatory changes to this harmful policy.

The 2020 Legislative Session is quickly approaching, with committee meetings beginning in September and the 60-day Session officially convening on January 14, 2020. Over the next few months, we will be meeting with leadership in both the House and Session, as well the Governor's office, to discuss and promote legislation that will cement in statute "doctor's choice" of online or in-person classes for the full 40-hours of continuing education requirements. We will be fiercely advocating for this policy change and intend to file a bill that ideally has the support of legislative and executive leadership who will help us to usher the bill through the committee process, the full House and Senate, and all the way to the Governor for signature.