



McCarthy Moves from House to Innovation Ohio; DiPalma Made Interim Chief

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Keary McCarthy, the House Democratic Caucus chief of staff, will leave next month to become the president of Innovation Ohio (IO), a progressive think tank that former Gov. Ted Strickland helped to start on his way out of office.

McCarthy will replace Janetta King, who has been splitting time between Ohio and Washington D.C. as chief of staff to Strickland in his new role as president of CAP Action, an arm of the Center for American Progress. King, IO's founding president, will remain chairwoman of the organization's board.

Andy DiPalma, formerly chief of staff and now legislative director for House Democrats, will replace McCarthy as interim chief of staff until the start of the next General Assembly.

McCarthy has been caucus chief of staff since 2011 and was previously communications director for then-Speaker Armond Budish (D-Beachwood) in the 128th General Assembly. He's also worked for the Bureau of Workers' Compensation, the 2008 election campaign of President Barack Obama, and Cuyahoga County Executive Ed FitzGerald's transition team.

"As the founder of Innovation Ohio, I'm absolutely thrilled that Keary has agreed to become its president. While I will remain deeply involved with IO, the organization needs a full-time, hands-on president, which was no longer possible for me because of my duties at CAP Action in Washington. Keary's work at the Ohio House has been first-rate -- and he is deeply committed to the progressive causes that are at the heart of our organization. Fortunately, the rest of IO's incredibly talented and hard-working team remains in place -- and with Keary at the helm, I know IO won't miss a beat in providing the kind of research, analysis and communication for which we've become known," King said in a statement

"Innovation Ohio's hard-hitting policy analysis has been an important counterweight to the conservative ideology that has dominated state government over these last three years. I believe that having a strong, Ohio-based progressive think tank in the mother-of-all swing states is critical both now and in the future. I'm thrilled at the opportunity to lead this organization, build

on its success, and find new ways to strengthen the progressive voice in Ohio and beyond," McCarthy said in a statement.

Budish and House Minority Leader Tracy Heard (D-Columbus) also issued statements on McCarthy's departure, calling him "a staple in progress politics."

"Keary is one of the hardest working, most thoughtful and well organized individuals in Democratic politics," said Heard. "Innovation Ohio is gaining a tremendous asset by bringing on Keary. I look forward to seeing him build on the success of the organization and helping to promote strong progressive policies that strengthen working and middle class families."

"Keary is a consummate professional who understands both policy and communications," said Budish. "He has been a great leader for the caucus and trusted advisor for many of us in the House. We will miss him in his role as chief of staff, but he has an opportunity to make a big impact leading Innovation Ohio."

McCarthy lives in Columbus with his wife, Lori, and their two children.

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