

**Title: Change Title of MSMS Executive Director to Chief Executive Officer**

**Introduced by: Jeffrey E. Jacobs, MD, for the Houghton-Baraga-Keweenaw County Delegation**

**Original Author: MSMS Board of Directors**

**Referred to: Reference Committee on Constitution & Bylaws**

**House Action: Approved on First Reading**

Whereas, the Michigan State Medical Society Board of Directors recommends that the title of the lead lay staff person of MSMS needs to be updated from Executive Director to Chief Executive Officer (CEO) to more accurately reflect the current duties and responsibilities of the position, and

Whereas, in the early 20th century, the title for the lead lay staff person of a professional not-for-profit organization evolved from “secretary” to “general secretary” to “executive secretary” to “executive director” to more accurately reflect the growing duties and responsibilities of the lead staff person during the past 100 years<sup>1</sup>, and

Whereas, if an organization currently has a paid executive director who is tasked with operational leadership and the board chair is a volunteer who is not active in the day-to-day management of the organization’s operations, then the title of Chief Executive Officer designation should be given to the executive director<sup>2</sup>, and

Whereas, changing the title of the chief staff officer to CEO can positively influence the organization’s internal and external perceptions, its culture, and its financial growth by clearly presenting that person’s role in the organization<sup>3</sup>, and

Whereas, a growing number of state medical societies under the American Medical Association are modernizing the title of their lead staff person with fewer than half still using the title of executive director<sup>4</sup>; therefore be it

**RESOLVED: That MSMS amend its bylaws to change the title of our lead staff person from Executive Director to the more contemporary title of Chief Executive Officer to more accurately reflect that position’s duties and responsibilities.**

**WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: NONE**

<sup>1</sup> Member, Director, or Trustee? Terminology May Be More Important Than You Think, Thomas J. Harvey and John Tropman, authors of *Nonprofit Governance*, 2009.

<sup>2</sup> Who is the Chief Executive Officer—the Executive Director or the Board Chair? Nonprofit Law Blog, June 2010.

<sup>3</sup> What’s in a Name? Benefits of the President/CEO Title, *Nonprofit Director*, Eugene Fram, Ed.D., Rochester Institute of Technology, November 2012.

<sup>4</sup> [www.ama-assn.org](http://www.ama-assn.org)