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Title: Waste Incinerator Ban

Introduced by: Gunjan Malhotra, MD, for the Wayne County Delegation

Original Author: Gunjan Malhotra, MD, Kaitlyn Dobesh, Taymaz Joneydian, and Shannon Paquette

Referred to: Reference Committee D

House Action: **REFER**

Whereas, the idea to increase the use of trash incinerators to produce heat/steam to generate electricity originated during an energy crisis during the Nixon administration, and

Whereas, as part of a financial decision in the 1970s, the city of Detroit decided to create the largest municipal solid waste incinerator in the nation, but this was not without controversy and opposition, and

Whereas, it required about \$440 million in bond sales to create the Detroit incinerator and it was hypothesized that the cost of waste collection services would be offset by revenue generated from the sale of steam and electricity, and

Whereas, health experts and environmentalists in southeast Michigan and southwestern Ontario even at the time opposed constructing this facility since it would put millions of tons of pollutants into the air that would increase morbidity rates, and

Whereas, the incinerator became operational in 1986, and due to the increase in pollution, the state of Michigan’s Department of Environment Quality required expensive new pollution control when the facility applied for permit renewals in 1991, and

Whereas, due to a lack of funds to install this equipment, the city of Detroit sold the facility to financial holding companies for \$54 million and the company issued bonds for \$157 million to finance the new equipment, and

Whereas, these bonds were still being paid by the city until 2009, and

Whereas, the firms also received pollution tax credits worth about \$200 million for the upgrade, and

Whereas, \$4.1 million dollars in Brownfield tax credits are given to the incinerator’s board of directors for operations, and

Whereas, the trash base for the city of Detroit has dwindled as the population of Detroit has dwindled and the facility began importing trash from neighboring areas to stay operational; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That MSMS 1) seek and actively advocate for state legislation that bans waste incinerators in the state of Michigan due to their adverse health effects and environmental impact in addition to the lack of cost effectiveness, and 2) support and prioritize alternative forms of waste management and clean energy production that do not pose health risks including reducing waste

54 production, recycling, and composting programs as well as use of regulated landfills throughout the
55 state; and be it further

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57 RESOLVED: That the Michigan Delegation to the American Medical Association (AMA) ask our
58 AMA to 1) seek and actively advocate for national legislation that bans waste incinerators in our nation
59 due to their adverse health effects, environmental impact and lack of cost effectiveness in waste
60 management and energy production, and 2) support and prioritize alternative forms of waste
61 management and clean energy production that do not pose health risks including reducing waste
62 production, recycling, and composting programs as well as use of regulated landfills throughout the
63 nation; and be it further

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65 RESOLVED: That MSMS seek and actively advocate for state legislation that would eventually
66 ban the use non-renewable materials (e.g., one time use plastics and polystyrene) and promote the
67 use of renewable materials in order to limit trash production and disposable materials that add to
68 landfills.

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71 WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: NONE

Relevant MSMS Policy:

Policy Statement of Environmental Pollution

MSMS supports efforts to improve environmental health. MSMS supports all agencies charged with the control of environmental pollution. (Prior to 1990)

- Edited 1998
- Reaffirmed (Res35-05A)
- Reaffirmed (Res02-16)

Relevant AMA Policy:

Green Initiatives and the Health Care Community H-135.939

Our AMA supports: (1) responsible waste management policies, including the promotion of appropriate recycling and waste reduction; (2) the use of ecologically sustainable products, foods, and materials when possible; (3) the development of products that are non-toxic, sustainable, and ecologically sound; (4) building practices that help reduce resource utilization and contribute to a healthy environment; and (5) community-wide adoption of 'green' initiatives and activities by organizations, businesses, homes, schools, and government and health care entities.

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19. Business and Legal Resources. Michigan Landfills: What you need to know. BLR. <http://www.blr.com/Environmental/Waste/Landfills-in-Michigan>. 2017. Accessed February 4, 2017. Relevant MSMS, AMA and MSS Policy: MSMS supports recycling materials whenever possible and purchasing recycled products. (Res60-90A) – Edited 1998