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Title: Identification Cards for Michigan’s Homeless Population

Introduced by: Amitosh Singh for the Medical Student Section

Original Authors: Jed Bell, Connor Buechler, Nousha Hefzi, Jessica Johns, Amanda Manly, Brianna Novitsky, Patty Shi, and Alexa Thibodeau

Referred to: Reference Committee B

House Action: **APPROVED AS AMENDED**

Whereas, more than 3.5 million Americans will experience homelessness in a given year, and 66,483 of these individuals reside in the state of Michigan<sup>1,2,3</sup>, and

Whereas, the American Medical Association (AMA) supports public policy initiatives pertaining to access to care for the homeless population (H-160.798), and

Whereas, the Michigan Commission on Community Action and Economic Opportunity has identified “inability to obtain legal identification” as “a key barrier for people seeking...medical care and participation in essential programs and services that support a healthy and successful life,”<sup>4</sup> and

Whereas, lack of identification serves as a major barrier for homeless individuals attempting to enroll in Medicaid, with 45.1 percent of the homeless without photo ID being denied access to Medicaid or medical services<sup>1,5</sup>, and

Whereas, it is estimated over 20 percent of the Michigan homeless population suffer from a severe mental illness or chronic substance abuse, and lack of ID is a barrier to access for drug treatment and rehabilitation programs<sup>6,7</sup>, and

Whereas, Michigan law allows for pharmacists to require photograph identification from individuals prior to dispensing prescription drugs<sup>8</sup>, and

Whereas, unsheltered homeless individuals often have poorer health, less access to healthcare, and an increased risk of premature mortality compared to the sheltered homeless<sup>9</sup>, and

Whereas, the National Law Center on Homelessness and Poverty found that 54.1 percent of homeless individuals were denied housing or shelter due to lack of ID<sup>1</sup>, and

Whereas, recent national surveys have shown that 28 percent of homeless individuals do not get enough to eat, and 40 percent report going one or more days without food due to the inability to afford it, yet only 37 percent of the homeless population received food stamps<sup>10</sup>, and

Whereas, lack of ID can serve as a barrier for homeless individuals who qualify for food stamps to access this service as the application process includes having information, including personal identification, verified<sup>10</sup>, and

Whereas, social security number must be verified during the Medicaid application process, yet a replacement social security card requires a form of identification<sup>11,12</sup>, and

Whereas, in the wake of the REAL ID Act, Michigan now requires a birth certificate, passport, or pre-existing ID card from anyone applying for a license or ID<sup>13,14,15</sup>, and

55           Whereas, obtaining a birth certificate in the state of Michigan costs \$34 and obtaining a  
56 passport costs \$110<sup>16,17</sup>, and

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58           Whereas, a national study identified 36 percent of homeless individuals could not obtain a  
59 photo ID because they could not afford it<sup>1</sup>, and

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61           Whereas, the city of Detroit offers municipal IDs aimed towards removing barriers associated  
62 with lack of ID, but offers this ID at a cost of \$25 compared to \$10 for a standard state ID card<sup>18,19</sup>, and

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64           Whereas, the AMA supports improving health outcomes and decreasing health care costs for  
65 the homeless (H-160.903), and

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67           Whereas, lack of identification has economic ramifications for the health care system in that  
68 individuals lacking or unable to obtain insurance are more likely to delay seeking care, present with  
69 more severe problems and increase emergency department utilization, thus resulting in increased  
70 health care costs<sup>20</sup>, and

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72           Whereas, the state of California has recognized the value of allowing homeless individuals to  
73 obtain free photo identification by passing this into law and a number of other state legislatures are in  
74 the process of addressing the issue as well<sup>21,22,23,24,25</sup>; therefore be it

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76           RESOLVED: That MSMS support legislation and policy changes that aim to provide a  
77 streamlined, simplified application process for identification cards, and support legislative changes  
78 and policy initiatives focused on providing ID cards to homeless individuals without charge.

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81           WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: NONE

### **Relevant MSMS Policy:**

#### **Denial of Medical Care to Indigents**

Indigents should not be denied medical care that is available to the remainder of society. (Prior to 1990)

– Edited 1998

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<sup>1</sup> Photo Identification Barriers Faced by Homeless Persons: The Impact of September 11. (2004). National Law Center on Homelessness & Poverty.

<sup>2</sup> Sheltered Homeless Persons in Detroit (MI) 10/1/2016 - 9/30/2017. (2017). Department of Housing and Urban Development's 2017 Annual Homeless Assessment Report to Congress.

<sup>3</sup> Ending Homelessness in Michigan: 2016 Annual Report. (2016). Michigan State Housing Development Authority.

<sup>4</sup> State Identification Cards. (2016). Michigan Commission on Community Action and Economic Opportunity.

<sup>5</sup> Medicaid Coverage and Care for the Homeless Population: Key Lessons to Consider for the 2014 Medicaid Expansion. (2012). Kaiser Commission on Medicaid and the Uninsured.

<sup>6</sup> HUD 2017 Continuum of Care Homeless Assistance Programs - Homeless Populations and Subpopulations. (2017). U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development.

<sup>7</sup> Peterson, J. A., Schwartz, R. P., Mitchell, S. G., Reisinger, H. S., Kelly, S. M., O'Grady, K. E., . . . Agar, M. H. (2010). Why don't out-of-treatment individuals enter methadone treatment programmes? *Int J Drug Policy*, 21(1), 36-42.  
doi:10.1016/j.drugpo.2008.07.004

<sup>8</sup> Administrative Code - Controlled Substances. (2014). Department of Licensing and Regulatory Affairs, Michigan Board of Pharmacy.

<sup>9</sup> Montgomery, A. E., Szymkowiak, D., Marcus, J., Howard, P., & Culhane, D. P. (2016). "Homelessness, Unsheltered Status, and Risk Factors for Mortality: Findings From the 100,000 Homes Campaign. *Public Health Rep*, 131(6), 765-772.  
doi:10.1177/0033354916667501

<sup>10</sup> Rosen, J., Hoey, R., & Steed, T. (2001). Food Stamp and SSI Benefits: Removing Access Barriers for Homeless People. *Journal of Poverty Law and Policy* (Vol. 34).

<sup>11</sup> "A Primer On Using Medicaid for People Experiencing Chronic Homelessness and Tenants in Permanent Supportive Housing." (2014). Office of Disability, Aging and Long-Term Care Policy, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

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- <sup>12</sup> Learn what documents you will need to get a Social Security Card. U.S. Social Security Administration.
- <sup>13</sup> REAL ID. U.S. Department of Homeland Security.
- <sup>14</sup> H.R.1268: REAL ID Act, Title II -- Improved Security for Drivers' Licenses and Personal Identification Cards, (2005). United States House of Representatives.
- <sup>15</sup> Applying for a license or ID. (2017). Michigan Department of State.
- <sup>16</sup> Birth, Death, Marriage or Divorce Record Fees. (2018). Michigan Department of Health and Human Services.
- <sup>17</sup> Passport Fees. (2018). U.S. Department of State - Bureau of Consular Affairs.
- <sup>18</sup> City of Detroit Launches Municipal ID Program. (December 7, 2016). City of Detroit.
- <sup>19</sup> State ID fees. (2018). Michigan Department of State.
- <sup>20</sup> The Uninsured And The Difference Health Insurance Makes. (September 1, 2012). Kaiser Family Foundation.
- <sup>21</sup> FFDL 6 Requirements for a California Identification Card. (2018) Department of Motor Vehicles, State of California.
- <sup>22</sup> Hawaii Senate Bill 11. (2017).
- <sup>23</sup> H.B. 2737 - An Act to provide identification to homeless youth and families. (2017). House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.
- <sup>24</sup> Texas House Bill 3354 - Relating to the fee for a driver's license or personal identification certificate for a homeless individual. (2017). Texas House of Representatives.
- <sup>25</sup> West Virginia H.B. 2215. (2017). West Virginia House of Representatives.