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3 Title: Well Trained County Health Officers and Leadership  
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5 Introduced by: David Whalen, MD, for the Ottawa County Delegation  
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7 Original Author: Beth Peter, MD  
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9 Referred To: Reference Committee D  
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11 House Action: **APPROVED AS AMENDED**

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14 Whereas, Michigan’s county health departments are an integrated part of health care  
15 delivery, expertise, and population health within the state, particularly in crisis situations like  
16 infectious disease outbreaks or toxin exposure events, and  
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18 Whereas, county health officers make decisions that affect patient care and patient health  
19 for their respective counties, and  
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21 Whereas, MSMS has a long history of advocating for quality standards to ensure medical  
22 decisions are made by properly trained individuals that meet the training criteria for their role in  
23 the health care system, and  
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25 Whereas, the state of Michigan has requirements in place to ensure County Health Officers  
26 are qualified, delineated in the Michigan Administrative Code R 325.13003, which requires that  
27 county health officers meet both educational and experience standards to ensure that they are  
28 qualified to fill their position, and  
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30 Whereas, the recently elected Ottawa County Board of Commissioners has removed their  
31 newly appointed county health officer without cause, and recommended replacing them with an  
32 individual who does not meet the state mandated qualifications for a county health officer, and  
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34 Whereas, the 2023 Ottawa County Board of Commissioners has chosen to appoint public  
35 health officials outside of the usual processes, without the usual formal national search and open  
36 interview process, and without meeting the normal qualifications for the position; therefore be it  
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38 RESOLVED: That MSMS support staffing county public health departments with highly  
39 qualified individuals through the processes outlined by the Department of Health and Human  
40 Services with formal job searches and open interviews to hire qualified candidates for permanent  
41 positions; and be it further  
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43 RESOLVED: That MSMS advocate for the appointment of qualified individuals to county  
44 health roles in cases where normal protocols to ensure the selection of qualified candidates are not  
45 followed. This advocacy may include, but should not be limited to, letters or phone calls to the  
46 relevant county or state agencies charged with oversight.  
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**Relevant MSMS Policy:****Organized Medicine's Liaison with Public Health**

MSMS encourages its component medical societies to develop liaison committees with their local public health departments and participate in local community assessment and improvement programs.

**Data Tampering in Public Health Reporting**

MSMS strongly opposes any intentional tampering, distortion, or manipulation of data used in preparation for an official report by public employees as they represent dangers to public health and unethical acts.

MSMS supports the criminalization of acts of intentional distortion, manipulation, or omission of data used in preparation for an official report by public employees, in an effort to dissuade such unethical actions and the danger they pose to public health.

**Establish and Maintain Stand-Alone Michigan Department of Public Health**

MSMS supports the establishment and maintenance of a standalone Michigan Department of Public Health that is organized in a way to ensure that an effective structure is in place to prioritize, meet, and respond to the public health needs of Michigan residents.

**Require MDHHS Director to be a Physician**

MSMS supports a requirement that the director of the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services be a physician licensed in the state of Michigan.

**Relevant AMA Policy:****Public Health Service H-440.998**

In matters pertaining to the traditional responsibilities of the United States Public Health Service, the medical and related scientific decisions should remain within the purview and jurisdiction of those who are trained medical officers.