



# MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY

*Every physician matters, each patient counts.*

April 23, 2025

HUGH M. TAYLOR, MD  
*President*

OLIVIA C. LIAO, MD  
*President-Elect*

BARBARA S. SPIVAK, MD  
*Immediate Past President*

LEE S. PERRIN, MD  
*Secretary-Treasurer*

ELI C. FREIMAN, MD, FAAP  
*Speaker*

GRAYSON W. ARMSTRONG, MD, MPH  
*Vice Speaker*

LOIS DEHLS CORNELL  
*Executive Vice President*

The Honorable Aaron Michlewitz  
Chair, House Committee on Ways & Means  
State House, Room 243  
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chair Michlewitz:

The Massachusetts Medical Society (MMS) thanks you, along with the committee members and staff, for your work in crafting H.4000, the House Ways and Means budget for Fiscal Year 2026. On behalf of our over 24,000 members, we applaud the House for making significant investments aimed at improving the health and well-being of all residents, especially as the Commonwealth confronts challenging fiscal realities.

We are grateful for the inclusion of **Outside Section 34** to establish a task force to address barriers and impediments to the practice of telehealth across state lines, as well as **Outside Sections 61, 62, and 63**, which together extend the two-year 500% FPL Connector Care pilot for one additional year. This program has greatly expanded access to affordable health care coverage and we strongly encourage its continuance.

We believe the following amendments would build upon the House's commitment to health care and we wish to be recorded in support of:

## **Amendment #1495— Massachusetts Medical Society Physician Health Services, Inc. (Schwartz)**

This amendment allocates \$250,000 in level funding to support the critical mission and services provided by Physician Health Services (PHS), as appropriated in line item 4510-0710 of the FY25 budget.

PHS, a nonprofit subsidiary of the MMS, is dedicated to promoting physician and medical student well-being, ensuring clinical effectiveness, and safeguarding patient safety. PHS provides education, prevention, assessment, referral to treatment, and monitoring services to support medical professionals across the Commonwealth.

Research shows that physician health programs like PHS reduce malpractice risk, enhance patient outcomes, mitigate provider burnout, and improve physician retention—an urgent priority amid ongoing workforce shortages, especially in primary care. Currently, approximately 36,000 members of the Massachusetts medical community are eligible to access PHS's confidential, no-cost services.

Historically, PHS has relied on charitable contributions and grants to sustain its operations. However, this model has become increasingly unsustainable due to rising demand for mental health services and broader financial pressures on all institutions. As an essential component of the state's health care infrastructure,

860 WINTER STREET  
WALTHAM, MA 02451-1411  
TEL (781) 893-4610  
TOLL-FREE (800) 322-2303  
FAX (781) 893-9136  
WWW.MASSMED.ORG

PHS requires a more reliable and stable funding source to effectively meet demand. Level funding would aid PHS in its continued operations, providing critical support to the physicians of Commonwealth.

**Additional Amendments**

The MMS would also like to be recorded **in support** of amendments #1049 (Perinatal Mental Health Trust Fund), #1223 (MassHealth Telehealth Reimbursement Parity Continuation), #1224 (Digital Health Navigators), and #1298 (Universal Adult Vaccine Program), and **in opposition** to amendments #1097 (Protection of Reproductive Rights) and #1558 (Provider Choice).

Thank you for your attention to these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Hugh M Taylor". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first letters of each name being capitalized and prominent.

Hugh M. Taylor, MD

CC: Members of the House Committee on Ways & Means