

1 **MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY HOUSE OF DELEGATES**

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4 Item #: 8
5 Code: Resolution
6 Title: Supporting the Creation of Legislative Policy Fellowships
7 for Physicians and Trainees in the MA Legislature
8 Sponsors: Bennett Vogt, Paula Whitmire, and Calvin Schaffer
9
10 Referred to: Reference Committee B
11 Odysseus Argy, MD, Chair
12

13 Whereas, An MMS strategic imperative is drive change with impactful advocacy, and this
14 proposal will advance this objective by providing physicians and trainees with the
15 opportunity to develop direct experience working with the Massachusetts government and
16 to be more informed in future advocacy on behalf of their practice and patients; and
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18 Whereas, The MMS has no policy on this resolution topic; and
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20 Whereas, A policy fellowship could provide physicians, medical trainees, and other
21 STEM degree holders an opportunity to work for a period of months or a year in a
22 legislative or government office on policy and governance issues relevant to their
23 training; and
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25 Whereas, A policy fellowship could provide the government access to individuals with
26 science and medical training to develop a network of experts that are informed about the
27 complexities of Massachusetts government and public policy; and
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29 Whereas, Critical strategic initiatives for the MMS in the coming year for the Physicians
30 category include leadership development and the reduction of regulations and
31 administrative burdens, both of which may be accomplished through the development of
32 fellowships in the Massachusetts government; and
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34 Whereas, National legislative fellowships and state-based fellowships currently exist in
35 at least seven (7) states (Idaho,¹ California,² New Jersey,³ Virginia,⁴ North Carolina,⁵
36 Missouri,⁶ and Connecticut⁷); and

¹ Idaho Science & Technology Policy Fellowship (ISTPF). University of Idaho.
<https://www.uidaho.edu/president/direct-reports/mcclure-center/istpf>. Published March 2020. Accessed August 3, 2020.

² California Council on Science and Technology Science Fellows Program. Frequently Asked Questions.
<https://ccst.us/ccst-science-fellows-program/frequently-asked-questions/>. Accessed July 30, 2020.

³ Rutgers Eagleton Institute of Politics. Eagleton Science and Politics Initiative.
<https://eagleton.rutgers.edu/eagleton-science-and-politics-initiative/>. Published 2020. Accessed July 30, 2020.

⁴ Commonwealth of Virginia Engineering and Science Fellows. Virginia Academy of Science, Engineering and Medicine. <http://www.vasem.org/covesfellowship/>. Published 2020. Accessed August 3, 2020.

⁵ NC STEM Policy Fellowship. North Carolina Sea Grant. <https://ncseagrant.ncsu.edu/funding-ops/fellowships/nc-stem-policy-fellowship/>. Published March 2020. Accessed August 3, 2020.

⁶ MOST Policy Fellows. MOST Policy Initiative. <https://mostpolicyinitiative.org/fellows/>. Published March 2020. Accessed August 3, 2020.

⁷ CASE Science and Technology Policy Fellowship Program. Connecticut Academy of Science and Engineering. <http://www.ctcase.org/fellowship.html>. Published March 2020. Accessed August 3, 2020.

1 Whereas, The American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS) Science
2 and Technology Policy Fellowship (STPF) places over 250 fellows with science, medical,
3 and engineering degrees into all branches of the federal government each year to learn
4 about policy-making and contribute to the policy-making process;⁸ and

5
6 Whereas, Among AAAS STPF alumni, 40–50% of fellows continue working in the field of
7 public policy; “20-25% return to the sector in which they worked previously; and 20–25%
8 use the experience as a stepping stone to a new opportunity”;² and

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10 Whereas, The AAAS STPF program has served as an impactful professional
11 development opportunity, with “nearly 100% of fellows reported that the Fellowship had
12 a major positive effect on their careers, regardless of the professional path they took
13 after completing the fellowship”;² and

14
15 Whereas, The California Council on Science and Technology (CCST) operates a state-
16 level version of the AAAS SPTF that places 15 doctorate-level scientists, physicians,
17 and engineers in the three branches of state government to serve under decision
18 makers and weigh in on critical decisions;² and

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20 Whereas, Fifty-four percent of CCST Policy Fellowship graduates continued working in
21 the California State Legislature or California state agencies;² and

22
23 Whereas, The Rutgers University Eagleton Science and Policy Fellowship places six
24 doctorate-level fellows into the New Jersey state government to support evidence-based
25 decisions in science and technology policy and provides professional development and
26 networking sessions for them through the Eagleton Institute of Politics;³ and

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28 Whereas, The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation sponsors Health Policy Fellows who
29 are mid-career health professionals seeking to understand and influence policymaking in
30 Washington, DC;⁹ and

31
32 Whereas, Policy fellowships for medical professionals and trainees have been proposed
33 by medical profession and specialty organizations to address the need for medically
34 informed leadership for issues such as climate change;¹⁰ and

35
36 Whereas, The current COVID-19 crisis demands government decisions informed by
37 technical backgrounds in medicine and science and highlights the importance of trained
38 physician advocates in preparing for and tackling future challenges;¹¹ and

39
40 Whereas, A bill to establish a policy fellowship for science and engineering degree
41 holders was filed with the MA senate as Bill S1797, but currently remains under review

⁸ American Association for the Advancement of Science. Science & Technology Policy Fellowships. <https://fellowshipapp.aaas.org/app/main/page/program-faq>. Published 2019. Accessed July 30, 2020.

⁹ Robert Wood Johnson Foundation Health Policy Fellows. <https://www.rwjf.org/en/library/funding-opportunities/2019/health-policy-fellows.html>. Published November 6, 2019. Accessed July 30, 2020.

¹⁰ Lemery J, Sorensen C, Balbus J, et al. Science policy training for a new physician leader: Description and framework of a novel climate and health science policy fellowship. *AEM Education and Training*. 2019;00:1–10. doi: 10.1002/aet2.10323.

¹¹ Cantave M, Perlson J, Lewis C, Byers B. COVID-19 reveals why we need physician advocates now. *Academic Medicine*. 2020;95(8):1125. doi: 10.1097/ACM.0000000000003479.

1 by committee and does not explicitly include medical professionals in the list of fellows
2 necessitating amendments and additions;¹² therefore, be it

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4 **RESOLVED, That the MMS advocate for science-policy fellowships with**
5 **placements in the Massachusetts legislature or other government offices for**
6 **physicians and medical trainees. (D)**

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8 Fiscal Note: No Significant Impact
9 (Estimated Expenses)

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11 Estimated Staff Effort
12 to Complete Directive(s): Ongoing Expense of \$1,500

¹²An Act Providing for Science and Technology Policy Fellows. Massachusetts Legislature.
<https://malegislature.gov/Bills/191/S1797>. Published January 22, 2020. Updated February 5, 2020.
Accessed July 23, 2020.