

**MASSACHUSETTS MEDICAL SOCIETY HOUSE OF DELEGATES**

Item #: 8  
Code: Resolution I-20 B-203  
Title: Supporting the Creation of Legislative Policy Fellowships  
for Physicians and Trainees in the MA Legislature  
Sponsors: Bennett Vogt, Paula Whitmire, and Calvin Schaffer  
Referred to: Reference Committee B  
Odysseus Argy, MD, Chair

Whereas, An MMS objective is B/Physicians/2: Advance physician wellness, professional growth and satisfaction, and promote inclusive work environments; and this proposal will advance this objective by providing physicians and trainees with the opportunity to develop direct experience working with the Massachusetts government and to be more informed in future advocacy on behalf of their practice and patients; and

Whereas, The MMS has no policy on this resolution topic; and

Whereas, A policy fellowship could provide physicians, medical trainees, and other STEM degree holders an opportunity to work for a period of months or a year in a legislative or government office on policy and governance issues relevant to their training; and

Whereas, A policy fellowship could provide the government access to individuals with science and medical training to develop a network of experts that are informed about the complexities of Massachusetts government and public policy; and

Whereas, Critical strategic initiatives for the MMS in the coming year for the Physicians category include leadership development and the reduction of regulations and administrative burdens, both of which may be accomplished through the development of fellowships in the Massachusetts government; and

Whereas, National legislative fellowships and state-based fellowships currently exist in at least seven (7) states (Idaho,<sup>1</sup> California,<sup>2</sup> New Jersey,<sup>3</sup> Virginia,<sup>4</sup> North Carolina,<sup>5</sup> Missouri,<sup>6</sup> and Connecticut<sup>7</sup>); and

<sup>1</sup> 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.

<sup>2</sup> 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.

<sup>3</sup> 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.

<sup>4</sup> 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.

<sup>5</sup> 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.

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

<sup>7</sup> 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;<sup>8</sup> 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”;<sup>2</sup> and

9  
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”;<sup>2</sup> 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;<sup>2</sup> and

19  
20 Whereas, Fifty-four percent of CCST Policy Fellowship graduates continued working in  
21 the California State Legislature or California state agencies;<sup>2</sup> 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;<sup>3</sup> and

27  
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;<sup>9</sup> 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;<sup>10</sup> 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;<sup>11</sup> and

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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

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<sup>8</sup> 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.

<sup>9</sup> 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.

<sup>10</sup> 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.

<sup>11</sup> 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;<sup>12</sup> therefore, be it  
3

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)**  
7

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

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<sup>12</sup>An 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.