

# MICHIGAN STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY

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*OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT 2011-2012 Steven E. Newman, MD*

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MEMO TO: Senator Jim Marleau, Chair  
Senate Health Policy Committee

FROM: Steven E. Newman, MD, President

SUBJECT: House Bill 4350

I would like to express the support of the Michigan State Medical Society for House Bill 4350. House Bill 4350 offers the protections needed for physicians in Michigan to serve the portion of Michigan's citizens who need care the most. These changes would continue to increase access to care for all of Michigan residents.

House Bill 4350 opens the doors for physicians who wish to volunteer their time and expertise at a free clinic, but are salaried. The liability umbrella that is taken advantage of by physicians currently working in free clinics does not specifically stipulate that when any physician walks through the doors to volunteer, their compensation model aside, they are all seen as volunteers and fall under that liability protection. This legislation would allow more physicians who want to work in the clinics the opportunity to do so.

Secondly, in those communities where clinics are present or cannot keep up with the amount of need, nonprofit groups have stepped in to fill the void; essentially creating a free clinic network where physicians in the network provide payment-free services under the same model as a standing free clinic. The current statute doesn't provide the protections to those participating in the network as it does for those who are working in the free clinics. This bill would change that, and with that change, open the door for more access to care for those who need it the most.

MSMS appreciates your willingness to move this issue forward and we ask for your support when the time comes. As you know, Michigan is facing an access of care issue in the near future. Providing these protections to Michigan's physicians will only help ease the access problems ahead. Again, thank you for your consideration of this very important piece of legislation.