

# MICHIGAN STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY

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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT 2012-2013 *John G. Bizon, MD*

DATE: December 12, 2012

MEMO TO: The Honorable John Walsh, Chairman

FROM: John G. Bizon, MD, President  
Michigan State Medical Society

SUBJECT: Senate Bills 1115, 1117, & 1118

On behalf of more than 16,000 of physician members of the Michigan State Medical Society, not to mention county and specialty medical societies, I urge you to support Senate Bills 1115, 1117, and 1118 ("Patients First Reform Package"). The bills collectively would preserve access to care, particularly for underserved populations around the state, and help stem the impending physician shortage.

Unnecessary lawsuits, legal loopholes, and outdated laws that make it difficult for physicians to open a practice and treat patients are driving physicians out of Michigan—or into early retirement. By 2020, the state of Michigan will have a physician shortage of approximately 4,500 doctors in fields like pediatrics, family practice, and general and internal medicine.

What's more, many of Michigan's cities and urban areas with the largest populations are at risk of becoming underserved.

Common sense reforms that put patients first will lead to fewer frivolous lawsuits, lower insurance rates, and will increase the number of physicians practicing in Michigan, thereby increasing competition and driving down costs.

As our state struggles to attract and retain high quality physicians to meet the growing health needs seniors, children and families, common sense tort reform legislation that puts patients first has the ability to make Michigan a much more appealing state in which to start a practice.

You can help improve the access and quality of care Michigan citizens receive by supporting this package.