

TO: MSSNY's Legislative & Physician Advocacy Committee

FROM: MSSNY Division of Governmental Affairs

DATE: October 17, 2019

RE: Resolution 201 – 2019 House of Delegates
Introduced by the 5th and 6th Districts, MSSNY

The following resolution was referred to the Council by the House of Delegates. The resolution was forwarded to the Legislative and Physician Advocacy Committee for further study and recommendation for the Council's consideration.

RESOLVED, that the Medical Society of the State of New York study the need for more capacity and use of State and National service programs for health or other public service work such as Job Corps, AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Senior Corps, National Health Service Corps, Doctors Across NY, loan forgiveness programs and defense service in New York State; and be it further

RESOLVED, that MSSNY request the American Medical Association to study the need for more capacity and use of the National service programs for health or other public service work such as Job Corps, AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Senior Corps, National Health Service Corps, Doctors Across NY, loan forgiveness programs and defense service; and be it further

RESOLVED, after the completion of public service work such as Job Corps, AmeriCorps, Peace Corps, Senior Corps, National Health Service Corps, Doctors Across NY, the participants would be eligible for meaningful scholarships/benefits/loan forgiveness for further training and education in healthcare, health related infrastructure, and public health.

At the House of Delegates, the Reference Committee report noted that the committee concurred with testimony in favor of increasing capacity and use of state and national service programs, and of directing funding to support participants' education in the health professions through scholarship and loan forgiveness programs. However, the committee also recommended that the resolution not be adopted because of concerns that the kind of study called for in the resolution was not in the purview of MSSNY, since it appears to go well beyond physician loan repayment programs.

At the September 11 meeting of the MSSNY Legislative & Physician Advocacy Committee, committee members agreed with the assessment of the Reference Committee that the resolution as written was beyond the purview of MSSNY. However, there was also discussion that the resolution was, at its core, seeking to assure that younger physicians had the opportunity to participate in meaningful loan forgiveness program, including in New York State. The average medical school debt was \$189,000 for 2017 graduates, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC). While New York has had for several years the Doctors Across New York (DANY) program to assist physicians in loan forgiveness in return for delivering care in underserved areas, the number of available slots for this program is relatively limited. Therefore, MSSNY working together with several other physician and hospital advocacy organizations have regularly called for an expansion of this program. This has included regular participation in a February Lobby Day specifically dedicated to this issue. These points were then reiterated at the October 17 meeting, including ongoing concerns regarding the insufficient funding for the DANY program, and the continuing importance of MSSNY making it a priority to seek expanded funding.

Given these ongoing activities, the Committee agreed that the best approach to address this resolution was to re-affirm existing MSSNY policies that support availability and expansion of loan forgiveness programs. MSSNY has adopted policies 85.963 and 85.999, which are focused on making available low interest loans for medical students as well as expanding existing loan repayment programs to assist students and younger physicians in establishing their careers.

RECOMMENDATION: That the MSSNY Legislative & Physician Advocacy Committee recommend that the MSSNY Council adopt the following resolution in lieu of the original resolution:

RESOLVED, That the Medical Society of the State of New York re-affirm MSSNY policies 85.963 and 85.999

85.963 Promotion of Financial Aid Opportunities for New York Medical Students:

MSSNY will: (a) advocate for the expansion of the *Doctors Across New York* Physician Loan Repayment Program by increasing the number of available positions, and directing any unused funds in the Loan Repayment Program toward the Practice Support Program; (b) support the development of State funded loan forgiveness and repayment programs for physicians; and (3) advocate for the development of scholarships and/or grants for medical students who plan to work in the state. (HOD 2011-108)

85.999 Manpower Assistance for Medical Students:

MSSNY supports the concept of continuing some form of federal manpower financial assistance and support, including general institutional grants, special project grants for medical schools and the continuation of the National Health Service Corps and other support mechanisms such as long term, low interest loans for medical students. (Council 6/26/80; Reaffirmed HOD 2013)