

46 some estimates pointing to 40% of African Americans being disenfranchised in some
47 legislative districts⁸; and

48
49 **WHEREAS**, health inequity is a direct threat to minority voting powers, which has
50 been shown to impact electoral outcomes resulting in further healthcare inequities⁹; and

51
52 **WHEREAS**, many of the barriers to voting are the same barriers to accessing
53 healthcare, implying that those who lack access to vote also lack access to
54 comprehensive, quality healthcare¹; and

55
56 **WHEREAS**, physicians have a lower reported voter turnout than the general
57 population, citing lack of registration as well as conflicting work schedules as the main
58 barriers¹⁰; and

59
60 **WHEREAS**, only 3.4% of medical students indicated being provided with time off
61 for voting in the 2016 and/or 2018 elections¹¹; and

62
63 **WHEREAS**, the University of Cincinnati College of Medicine began providing
64 time off for voting to medical students in preclinical and clinical years for midterm and
65 presidential elections in 2022 as part of a new student handbook policy¹²; and

66
67 **WHEREAS**, 1 in 5 voters with a disability either needed assistance or had some
68 difficulty in voting in 2022, which was 3 times the rate of voters without disabilities¹³; and

69
70 **WHEREAS**, 42% of voters with disabilities used a mail ballot in 2022, compared
71 to 35 percent of voters without disabilities¹⁴; and

72
73 **WHEREAS**, lower voting rates are linked to poor self-rated health⁹; and

74
75 **WHEREAS**, Adolescents followed into adulthood were found to have more
76 positive mental health and health behaviors when they voted¹⁴; and

77
78 **WHEREAS**, a nonpartisan voter registration drive lead by clinicians in a federally
79 qualified hospital setting was able to register 89% of eligible voters and 38% of total
80 patients engaged in the waiting room over a 12 week period, demonstrating how clinic
81 settings can be places of voter engagement¹⁵; and

82
83 **WHEREAS**, healthcare workers across the country in 2020 were able to help
84 patients submit 27,317 voter registration forms and 17,216 mail-in ballot requests using
85 a voting support tool designed by healthcare workers for healthcare workers¹⁶; and

86
87 **WHEREAS**, residents' efforts led to 99% of their eligible peers registering to vote
88 over a 6 week period in 2020 at a large Texas internal medicine residency program¹⁷;
89 and

90

91 **WHEREAS**, current federal law supports nonpartisan voter registration efforts at
92 healthcare facilities, with further support by government agencies like the Health
93 Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) and the Department of Education
94 (DoE)¹⁸; and

95
96 **WHEREAS**, AMA Policy H-440.805 supports access to voting and removing
97 barriers to voting as a way to promote public health, as it acknowledges voting is a
98 social determinant of health; and

99
100 **WHEREAS**, AMA Policy D-65.982 supports medical students, residents, fellows,
101 and physicians voting; and therefore

102
103 **BE IT RESOLVED**, that our OSMA supports measures to facilitate safe and
104 equitable access to voting as a harm-reduction strategy to safeguard public health and
105 mitigate unnecessary risk of infectious disease transmission by measures including but
106 not limited to: (a) extending polling hours; (b) increasing the number of polling locations;
107 (c) extending early voting periods; (d) mail-in ballot postage that is free or prepaid by the
108 government; (e) improving access to drop off locations for mail-in or early ballots; (f) use
109 of a P.O. box for voter registration; and (g) protecting voting rights of Ohioans who have
110 historically been barred from voting, including those identifying with a minority group or
111 of a felony status; and be it further

112
113 **RESOLVED**, that our OSMA opposes requirements for voters to stipulate a
114 reason in order to receive a ballot by mail and other constraints for eligible voters to
115 vote-by-mail; and be it further

116
117 **RESOLVED**, that our OSMA encourages medical schools and hospitals to share
118 nonpartisan information relating to upcoming elections and supports efforts to provide
119 time off to medical students and employees for voting in elections; and be it further

120
121 **RESOLVED**, that our OSMA supports nonpartisan voter registration efforts in
122 healthcare settings.

123
124 **Fiscal Note:** \$ (Sponsor)
125 \$ 500 (Staff)

126
127 **References:**

- 128
129
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- a. Support for Safe and Equitable Access to Voting H-440.805
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