



**AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
OTOLARYNGOLOGY—
HEAD AND NECK SURGERY**

NEWS RELEASE

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American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery Opposes Proposed Michigan Tax on Physicians

ENT Doctors Warn Tax Could Limit Access to High-Quality Healthcare for Patients

Alexandria, VA – The American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery (AAO-HNS) announced its opposition to a proposed physician tax in the state of Michigan, which was passed by the Michigan House of Representatives in early October.

Among its chief concerns, the AAO-HNS warns that adoption of the 3 percent tax will likely impact physician recruitment and retention in Michigan, particularly in light of the financial stresses many physicians already face, including below-cost government reimbursements and other taxes. This discriminatory tax, which targets only physicians, will affect all Michigan residents as access to quality care decreases as a result. The AAO-HNS is also concerned that there is no guarantee that all the revenues generated by the tax will be used to fund Medicaid or provide physician relief programs, particularly in the long term.

A number of the Academy's 340 Michigan members participated in a "White Coat Rally" in Lansing on October 20, 2009, organized by the Michigan State Medical Society (MSMS), during which participants expressed their concerns about how the tax would impact their practices and patients.

"We are all worried about access to care. Many in the healthcare community believe that this would put the private practitioner out of business," said Academy Board of Governors chair-elect Michael Seidman, MD, who took part in the rally. "Physicians already pay state and federal income tax and a Michigan business tax; now there would be a third tax on us. Others told legislators that they would have to release their office managers, their medical assistants, and more."

The AAO-HNS stands with the MSMS and thousands of Michigan physicians in encouraging Michigan policymakers to act responsibly and reject the proposed tax on physician revenues.

About the AAO-HNS

The American Academy of Otolaryngology – Head and Neck Surgery (www.entnet.org), one of the oldest medical associations in the nation, represents nearly 12,000 physicians and allied health professionals who specialize in the diagnosis and treatment of disorders of the ears, nose, throat, and related structures of the head and neck. The Academy serves its members by facilitating the advancement of the science and art of medicine related to otolaryngology and by representing the specialty in governmental and socioeconomic issues. The organization's vision: "Empowering otolaryngologist-head and neck surgeons to deliver the best patient care."

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