

Unlock Michigan 2.0 attacks on public health create harsh environment for health officers doing their jobs

*Resignation of health officer for the Health Department of Northwest Michigan
latest example of what Unlock Michigan 2.0 would unleash*

LANSING — Michigan voters should decline to sign the reckless Unlock Michigan 2.0 ballot petition that would hamstring public health officers trying to do their jobs, **Public Health Over Politicians** said today in response to news that yet another health officer in Michigan is resigning from her post.

Bridge reported that Lisa Peacock will resign in April after what has been a tumultuous relationship between her efforts to serve the public and protect their health and a politically appointed board that has tried to thwart that work.

“Michigan voters should know the law requires specific education and training to serve as a public health officer in this state and Unlock Michigan 2.0 seeks to put the health and safety of our residents in the hands of unqualified politicians,” said **Linda Yaroeh**, retired health officer of the Health Department of Northwest Michigan and member of Public Health Over Politicians. “Public health officers are just trying to do their jobs, yet the political environment they find themselves in is growing more toxic and this ballot initiative is part and parcel to that. It’s unfortunate to see yet another public health officer leave their job because of the intimidation and second guessing going on by those who lack the proper education and training.”

The Unlock Michigan 2.0 ballot petition would shift decision-making authority away from public health experts and move it to politicians during public health emergencies. This shift would happen 28 days after a health order is issued, regardless of the status of a health emergency such as COVID-19, Legionnaires’ disease or hepatitis.

Public Health Over Politicians is made up of public health officials, doctors and nurses who believe the health of all Michiganders should come before partisan and political games. The group has been endorsed by a growing list of organizations, including: the Michigan Nurses Association, Michigan Association of Local Public Health, Michigan Osteopathic Association, Michigan Association of Public Health and Preventive Medicine Physicians and the Michigan Parent Alliance for Safe Schools.

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