

Tennessee medical board removes virus misinformation policy from website amid GOP pressure | TheHill

By Caroline Vakil

December 9, 2021

A Tennessee medical board voted to delete — but not rescind — a COVID-19 vaccine misinformation policy from its website after a state Health Department attorney said a Republican lawmaker could make moves toward dissolving their board, The Tennessean reported.

The news outlet, which obtained a letter sent from Tennessee Department of Health lawyer Jennifer Putnam to the Tennessee Board of Medical Examiners, reported that in Putnam's letter, she said that state Rep. John Ragan (R) had indicated he was not pleased with their COVID-19 vaccine misinformation policy.

"Chairman Ragan also made clear he has no qualms about moving forward with dissolving the BME and reconstituting it with new members," Putnam said in her letter to the board, according to The Tennessean. "He has in fact done this with another state agency, so it is not a hollow threat."

The misinformation policy, adopted in September, allows for physicians' medical licenses to be either suspended or revoked if they spread information shown to be false about the COVID-19 vaccine. The board voted 7-3 to delete the policy from its website but not to have it rescinded.

A spokesperson for the Tennessee Department of Health indicated in a statement to The Hill that the policy conflicted with a rule passed during a special session in the General Assembly.

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