

RESOLUTION 67 - 05A

Title: Physicians' Duty to Report Torture
Introduced by: Frank P. Bongiorno, MD, for the Wayne County Delegation
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Referred to: Reference Committee E
House Action: Approved

Whereas, the Geneva Convention prohibits the torture of prisoners and requires the reporting of torture, and

Whereas, adherence to the Geneva Convention is required by armed service regulations, and

Whereas, the codes of ethics of the World Health Organization and the AMA prohibit any physician involvement in torture, and

Whereas, the MSMS Committee on Bioethics believes that the vast majority of physicians serving in the U.S. military serve with an extremely high degree of ethics and professionalism, such that any deviation from these standards of ethics, among a few medical personnel, would constitute a serious and deplorable breach of these high standards and unfairly tarnish the reputation of other military physicians, and

Whereas, previous, known military inquiries into detainee abuse in Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay have implicated some medical personnel but have not looked specifically at the role of medical personnel in these practices, and

Whereas, those charged with teaching ethics to future physicians are handicapped in discussing the ethical standards expected of military physicians when they are unable to learn specific examples of both ethically exemplary and ethically questionable behavior under difficult wartime conditions; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That the Michigan Delegation to the AMA ask the AMA to conduct an investigation sufficient to assure that the U.S. military is currently or has recently investigated the specifically medical issues related to alleged detainee abuses, and the involvement or noninvolvement of medical personnel in such activities; and that bodies currently involved in training military physicians are addressing the ethical codes and principles pertinent to the prevention of abuse of detainees, including where appropriate real examples drawn from recent events in Iraq, Afghanistan and Guantanamo Bay.

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: NONE