

RESOLUTION 12-08A

Title: Preserving a Physician's Right of Conscience

Introduced by: Kenneth J. Edwards, MD, Berrien County

Original Author: Kenneth J. Edwards, MD

Referred to: Reference Committee C

House Action: Referred to the Board for Study

Whereas, MSMS is the largest and most influential physician organization in Michigan, and

Whereas, MSMS has a tradition of supporting physician autonomy in areas of conscience, and

Whereas, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) has recently issued a position statement that interferes with a physician from exercising this right of conscience, and

Whereas, American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology (ABOG) has stated in writing that the maintenance of board certification in obstetrics and gynecology requires compliance with ACOG ethics statements, and failure to do so may result in revocation of board certification, and

Whereas, board certification is often a necessary credential for hospital staff membership, insurance panel inclusion, and specialty society membership, and

Whereas, the AMA has adopted a policy on rights of conscience that states "neither physician, hospital, nor hospital personnel shall be required to perform any act violative of personally held moral principles," and

Whereas, the AMA Council on Ethical and Judicial Affairs has delivered an opinion that a doctor may refuse to enter a physician patient relationship when "a specific treatment sought by an individual is incompatible with the physician's personal, religious, or moral beliefs;" therefore be it

RESOLVED: That MSMS vigorously defend the right of every physician to exercise his or her right of conscience; and be it further

RESOLVED: That MSMS oppose any attempt by certifying bodies to deny or revoke board certification as a punitive action against physicians exercising their right of conscience; and be it further

RESOLVED: That MSMS correspond with the American Board of Obstetrics and Gynecology and the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists to voice objection to policies that interfere with physicians exercising their right of conscience by denying or revoking board certification as a punitive action; and be it further

RESOLVED: That the Michigan Delegation to the AMA ask the AMA to build a national coalition to preserve a physician's right of conscience.

WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: NONE