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Title: Coal-Tar-Based Sealcoat Threat to Human Health and the Environment

Introduced by: Kaitlyn Dobesh, Gunjan Malhotra, and Tamara Roumayah for the Medical Student Section

Original Author: Gunjan Malhotra

Referred to: Reference Committee D

House Action: **APPROVE**

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Whereas, coal-tar-based sealcoats, containing a high concentration of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH) , are commonly used and applied widely on various forms of pavement and playgrounds as a form of maintenance, and

Whereas, application of products containing high PAH concentration comes with adverse health and environmental consequences, and

Whereas, PAH compounds have been proven to be carcinogenic, mutagenic, and teratogenic to humans according to the International Agency for Research on Cancer, and

Whereas, application of these sealcoats to pavements and playgrounds erodes and evaporates over time causing chemicals, and specifically PAH, to leach into the water, soil, and air, and

Whereas, alternatives including asphalt, acrylic, or latex sealcoats with low or no PAH exist at a similar cost; some even argue that sealing is not necessary, as it is more cost effective to repave occasionally rather than to sealcoat regularly, and

Whereas, individuals with lifelong exposure to coal-tar sealcoat treated pavements and playgrounds have a 38-fold higher risk of cancer, and

Whereas, studies show 50-75 percent of PAH found in the Great Lakes sediment originates from coal tar sealcoats, which eventually ends up in the aquatic wildlife including those species consumed by people, and

Whereas, Washington, DC, Minnesota, Washington, and counties, townships, and municipalities in many other states including Michigan have banned the use of coal-tar sealcoats; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That MSMS advocate for state legislation to ban the use of pavement sealcoats that contain polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH); or at least, use sealcoat products that contain low or no PAH, specifically products where the concentration of PAH is less than 1/1000th the concentration in coal-tar sealcoats; and be it further

48           RESOLVED: That the Michigan Delegation to the American Medical Association (AMA)  
49 ask our AMA to advocate for national legislation to ban the use of pavement sealcoats that  
50 contain polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH); or at least, use sealcoat products that contain  
51 low or no PAH, specifically products where the concentration of PAH is less than 1/1000th the  
52 concentration in coal-tar sealcoats.

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55           WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: NONE

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Reference(s):

1. International Agency for Research on Cancer, 1987. Coal-tar Pitches.
2. IARC Monographs on the Evaluation of Carcinogenic Risks to Humans, Supplement 7, pp 174-175.
3. Van Metre, Peter C., and Barbara J. Mahler. "Contribution of PAHs from coal-tar pavement sealcoat and other sources to 40 US lakes." *Science of the Total Environment* 409.2 (2010): 334-344.
4. Mahler, Barbara J., et al. "Acute toxicity of runoff from seal coated pavement to *Ceriodaphnia dubia* and *Pimephales promelas*." *Environmental Science & Technology* 49.8 (2015): 5060-5069.
5. Mahler, Barbara J., et al. "Coal-tar-based pavement sealcoat and PAHs: implications for the environment, human health, and stormwater management." *Environmental Science & Technology* 46.6 (2012): 3039-3045.
6. D.C. Code § 8-153.01
7. Washington, Chapter 70.295 RCW Minnesota, 116.202 (2015)
8. Action to Restrict or Discontinue the Use of Coal Tar-Based Sealants in the United States, Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (2014) [pca.state.mn.us](http://pca.state.mn.us)