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3 Title: End Child Marriage in Michigan  
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5 Introduced by: Charles J. Barone, II, MD, for the Wayne County Delegation  
6  
7 Original Author: Brianna Sohl  
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9 Referred to: Reference Committee B  
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11 House Action: **APPROVED**  
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13  
14 Whereas, with the adoption of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the United Nations defined  
15 a child as any person younger than 18; this definition has since been used to establish quantifiable targets  
16 for international development including child marriage<sup>1</sup>, and  
17

18 Whereas, the United States Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls, released in 2016 by the  
19 State Department, states that marriage before age 18 is a "human rights abuse" that produces devastating  
20 effect on a girl's life<sup>2</sup>, and  
21

22 Whereas, between 2000 and 2010 more than 167,000 children across 38 states were married, mostly  
23 to men 18 or older while the remaining 12 states and the District of Columbia did not track this information<sup>3</sup>,  
24 and  
25

26 Whereas, 4870 children were married in Michigan between 2000 and 2014<sup>4</sup>, and  
27

28 Whereas, child marriage in the United States is associated with a 23 percent greater risk of disease  
29 onset, including heart attack, diabetes, cancer, and stroke<sup>5</sup>, and  
30

31 Whereas, child marriage is associated with higher rates of sexually transmitted infections, early  
32 pregnancies, divorce, and intimate partner violence than women married at 21<sup>6,7,8</sup>, and  
33

34 Whereas, mothers around the world who are under the age of 18 have a 35 percent to 55 percent  
35 higher risk of delivering a preterm or low-birthweight infant than mothers older than 19 years<sup>9</sup>, and  
36

37 Whereas, child marriage in the United States has been associated with significantly increased risk of  
38 almost all psychiatric disorders; approximately 35 percent of women who were married as children  
39 presented with psychiatric disorders and 53 percent had a lifetime history of psychiatric illnesses<sup>6,10</sup>, and  
40

41 Whereas, our American Medical Association (AMA) has set precedents for opposing behaviors that  
42 are deemed traditional or legal and normal in other countries, such as female genital mutilation (H-525.980),  
43 drinking under the age of 21 (D-60.973), and child labor (H-65.966), and  
44

45 Whereas, state and federal laws frequently oppose behaviors that may be deemed culturally normal  
46 and even important traditions outside of the United States (e.g., female genital mutilation, taking  
47 hallucinogenic substances, polygamy), and  
48

49 Whereas, the majority of marriages among immigrant children occur after their arrival to the United  
50 States with only a minority being wed outside of the country<sup>1</sup>, and  
51

52 Whereas, statutory rape charges when young girls become pregnant may be avoided and have been  
53 motivation to encourage marriage between the offender and the girl<sup>1</sup>, and

54           Whereas, Delaware was the first state in the United States to ban child marriage with no exception  
55 based on the consideration that children under 18 are unable to file for divorce or seek shelter at a domestic  
56 violence shelter if needed<sup>11</sup>; therefore be it

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58           RESOLVED: That MSMS support legislation which would prohibit marriage licenses being issued to  
59 persons younger than 18 years of age in the state of Michigan; and be it further

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61           RESOLVED: That the Michigan Delegation to the American Medical Association (AMA) ask our AMA  
62 to advocate for federal legislation to end the practice of child marriage.

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64  
65           WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: \$25,000 or more as this Resolution requires MSMS to engage  
66 in legislative advocacy.

**Relevant MSMS Policy:** None

**Relevant AMA Policy:** None

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<sup>1</sup> Koski A, Heymann J. Child marriage in the united states: how common is the practice, and which children are at greatest risk? Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health. 2018; 50(2):59-65.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of State. U.S Global Strategy to Empower Adolescent Girls. <https://www.state.gov/documents/organization/254904.pdf>. Published March 2016.

<sup>3</sup> Reiss F. Why can 12-year-olds still get married in the United States? The Washington Post. February 10, 2017.

<sup>4</sup> Shaffer C. Michigan legislature tackles child marriage. Michigan Radio. November 30, 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Dupre ME, Meadows SO. Disaggregating the effects of marital trajectories on health. Journal of Family Issues. 2007; 28(5):623-652. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X06296296>.

<sup>6</sup> Strat YL, Dubertret C, Foll BL. Child marriage in the united states and its association with mental health in women. Pediatrics. 2011; 128(3):524-530. doi:10.1542/peds.2011-0961

<sup>7</sup> United Nations Children’s Fund. Ending Child Marriage: Progress and Prospects. [https://www.unicef.org/media/files/Child\\_Marriage\\_Report\\_7\\_17\\_LR..pdf](https://www.unicef.org/media/files/Child_Marriage_Report_7_17_LR..pdf). 2014.

<sup>8</sup> WORLD Policy Analysis Center. Assessing National Action on Protection from Child Marriage.

[https://www.worldpolicycenter.org/sites/default/files/WORLD\\_Fact\\_Sheet\\_Legal\\_Protection\\_Against\\_Child\\_Marriage\\_2015.pdf](https://www.worldpolicycenter.org/sites/default/files/WORLD_Fact_Sheet_Legal_Protection_Against_Child_Marriage_2015.pdf). March 2015.

<sup>9</sup> Nour NM. Child marriage: a silent health and human rights issue. Reviews in Obstetrics & Gynecology. 2009; 2(1):51-56.

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<sup>10</sup> Hamilton, VE. The age of marital capacity: reconsidering civil recognition of adolescent marriage. William & Mary Law School Scholarship Repository. 2012; 1430:1818-1862. <https://scholarship.law.wm.edu/facpubs/1430>.

<sup>11</sup> Feleke B. Delaware becomes first US state to fully ban child marriage. CNN. May 12, 2018. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/05/12/us/delaware-child-marriage-ban/index.html>.