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Title: Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health
Introduced by: Larry Junck, MD, for the Washtenaw County Delegation
Original Author: Larry Junck, MD
Referred to: Reference Committee C
House Action: **APPROVED**

Whereas, human-caused climate change is an urgent problem confronting Michigan, the United States, and the world, and

Whereas, human-caused worldwide temperature increase has already reached 1.0° C above pre-industrial levels with no slowdown, and

Whereas, a global temperature increase above 1.5° C would be associated with major effects including rising oceans, more extreme weather events, threats to agriculture and to our food supply, and loss of species, and

Whereas, burning of fossil fuels already causes about 100,000 excess deaths annually in the US and 3.5 million deaths worldwide, and this loss of lives can be reduced by reducing the burning of fossil fuels, and

Whereas, other health consequences of climate change are many and may include health problems and deaths directly caused by heat, flooding in some locales, drought in other locales, extreme weather events, vector-borne diseases, interruption of clean water supply, starvation, problems caused by displacement of populations, and interference with the delivery of health care, and

Whereas, the Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health (a.k.a., “the Consortium”) has the potential to advocate effectively for measures to reduce climate change, and

Whereas, our American Medical Association has joined the Consortium as an affiliate, and

Whereas, specialty organizations representing over 500,000 physicians are affiliates of the Consortium, including the American College of Physicians, the American Academy of Family Practice, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American College of Obstetrics and Gynecology, the American Psychiatric Association, the American Academy of Dermatology, and others, and

Whereas, if MSMS joins the Consortium, it may have the distinction of being the first state medical society to join, and

Whereas, joining the Consortium as an affiliate requires only endorsing the Consortium’s Consensus Statement, costs nothing, and is not associated with any other obligations; therefore be it

RESOLVED: That MSMS endorse the Consensus Statement of the Medical Society Consortium on Climate and Health, as stated below, and join the Consortium as an affiliate member.

“We - the undersigned medical societies - support the international scientific consensus, as established in multiple national and international assessments, that the Earth is rapidly warming, and that human actions (especially burning of fossil fuels) are the primary causes. As established in the 2016 U.S.

55 Climate and Health Assessment - The Impacts of Climate Change on Human Health in the United States: A
56 Scientific Assessment - the resulting changes in our climate are creating conditions that harm human health
57 through extreme weather events, reduced air and water quality, increases in infectious and vector-borne
58 diseases, and other mechanisms. While climate change threatens the health of every American, some people
59 are more vulnerable and are most likely to be harmed, including: infants and children; pregnant women;
60 older adults; people with disabilities; people with pre-existing or chronic medical conditions, including
61 mental illnesses; people with low-income; and indigenous peoples, some other communities of color, and
62 immigrants with limited English proficiency.

63
64 As medical professionals, many of our members know firsthand the harmful health effects of climate
65 change on patients. We know that addressing climate change through reduction in fossil fuel use will lead to
66 cleaner air and water, to immediate health benefits for Americans, and will help to limit global climate
67 change.

68
69 We support educating the public and policymakers in government and industry about the harmful
70 human health effects of global climate change, and about the immediate and long-term health benefits
71 associated with reducing greenhouse gas emissions (i.e., heat-trapping pollution) and taking other
72 preventive and protective measures that contribute to sustainability. We support actions by physicians and
73 hospitals within their workplaces to adopt sustainable practices and reduce the carbon footprint of the
74 health delivery system.

75
76 We recognize the importance of health professionals' involvement in policymaking at the local,
77 state, national, and global level, and support efforts to implement comprehensive and economically
78 sensitive approaches to limiting climate change to the fullest extent possible.

79
80 Our organizations are committed to working with officials at all levels to reduce emissions of heat-
81 trapping pollution, and to work with health agencies to promote research on effective interventions and to
82 strengthen the public health infrastructure with the aim of protecting human health from climate change.

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85 WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: \$1,000 or more for costs related to the adoption of new or
86 revised MSMS or AMA policy.

Relevant MSMS Policy: None

Climate Change

MSMS supports the American Medical Association policy, Global Climate Change and Human Health (H-135.938).
(Res77-16)

Policy Statement of Environmental Pollution (Pending final approval by the 2019 MSMS HOD)

MSMS supports efforts to improve environmental health including the prioritization of alternative forms of waste
management and clean energy production that do not pose health risks.

MSMS supports all agencies charged with the control of environmental pollution. (Prior to 1990)

Edited 1998

Reaffirmed (Res35-05A)

Reaffirmed (Res02-16)

Amended 2019 (Res39-18)

Air and Water Pollution

Reasonable and scientific study should be directed toward the sensible control of the major problems of air and water
pollution, whether it is the dusts and wastes of industry, the products of combustion of gasoline or oil (automobiles),
the combustion products of home heating and burning equipment, or of smoking tobacco. (Prior to 1990)

– Edited 1998

– Reaffirmed (Res02-16)

Air Pollution and EPA Clean Power Plan Policies

MSMS supports:

- The Environmental Protection Agency's authority to promulgate rules to regulate and control greenhouse gas emissions in the United States;
- Increased physician participation in regional and state decision-making regarding air pollution across the United States;
- State legislation and regulations that meaningfully reduce power plant emissions of carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide;
- Efforts to limit carbon dioxide emissions through the reduction of the burning of coal in the state's power generating plants, efforts to improve the efficiency of power plants, and continued development of alternative renewable energy sources; and,
- National enactment of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Power Plan and the implementation of the Plan's policies in Michigan.

(Res77-16)

Relevant AMA Policy:

AMA Advocacy for Environmental Sustainability and Climate H-135.923

Our AMA (1) supports initiatives to promote environmental sustainability and other efforts to halt global climate change; (2) will incorporate principles of environmental sustainability within its business operations; and (3) supports physicians in adopting programs for environmental sustainability in their practices and help physicians to share these concepts with their patients and with their communities.

Global Climate Change and Human Health H-135.938

Our AMA:

1. Supports the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's fourth assessment report and concurs with the scientific consensus that the Earth is undergoing adverse global climate change and that anthropogenic contributions are significant. These climate changes will create conditions that affect public health, with disproportionate impacts on vulnerable populations, including children, the elderly, and the poor.
2. Supports educating the medical community on the potential adverse public health effects of global climate change and incorporating the health implications of climate change into the spectrum of medical education, including topics such as population displacement, heat waves and drought, flooding, infectious and vector-borne diseases, and potable water supplies.
3. (a) Recognizes the importance of physician involvement in policymaking at the state, national, and global level and supports efforts to search for novel, comprehensive, and economically sensitive approaches to mitigating climate change to protect the health of the public; and (b) recognizes that whatever the etiology of global climate change, policymakers should work to reduce human contributions to such changes.
4. Encourages physicians to assist in educating patients and the public on environmentally sustainable practices, and to serve as role models for promoting environmental sustainability.
5. Encourages physicians to work with local and state health departments to strengthen the public health infrastructure to ensure that the global health effects of climate change can be anticipated and responded to more efficiently, and that the AMA's Center for Public Health Preparedness and Disaster Response assist in this effort.
6. Supports epidemiological, translational, clinical and basic science research necessary for evidence-based global climate change policy decisions related to health care and treatment.

Global Climate Change - The "Greenhouse Effect" H-135.977

Our AMA: (1) endorses the need for additional research on atmospheric monitoring and climate simulation models as a means of reducing some of the present uncertainties in climate forecasting; (2) urges Congress to adopt a comprehensive, integrated natural resource and energy utilization policy that will promote more efficient fuel use and energy production; (3) endorses increased recognition of the importance of nuclear energy's role in the production of electricity; (4) encourages research and development programs for improving the utilization efficiency and reducing the pollution of fossil fuels; and (5) encourages humanitarian measures to limit the burgeoning increase in world population.

Stewardship of the Environment H-135.973

The AMA: (1) encourages physicians to be spokespersons for environmental stewardship, including the discussion of these issues when appropriate with patients; (2) encourages the medical community to cooperate in reducing or recycling waste; (3) encourages physicians and the rest of the medical community to dispose of its medical waste in a safe and properly prescribed manner; (4) supports enhancing the role of physicians and other scientists in environmental education; (5) endorses legislation such as the National Environmental Education Act to increase public understanding of environmental degradation and its prevention; (6) encourages research efforts at ascertaining the physiological and psychological effects of abrupt as well as chronic environmental changes; (7) encourages international exchange of information relating to environmental degradation and the adverse human health effects resulting from environmental degradation; (8) encourages and helps support physicians who participate actively in international planning and development conventions associated with improving the environment; (9) encourages educational programs for worldwide family planning and control of population growth; (10) encourages research and development programs for safer, more effective, and less expensive means of preventing unwanted pregnancy; (11) encourages programs to prevent or reduce the human and environmental health impact from global climate change and environmental degradation. (12) encourages economic development programs for all nations that will be sustainable and yet nondestructive to the environment; (13) encourages physicians and environmental scientists in the United States to continue to incorporate concerns for human health into current environmental research and public policy initiatives; (14) encourages physician educators in medical schools, residency programs, and continuing medical education sessions to devote more attention to environmental health issues; (15) will strengthen its liaison with appropriate environmental health agencies, including the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS); (16) encourages expanded funding for environmental research by the federal government; and (17) encourages family planning through national and international support.