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Title: Children in Michigan Separated from their Parents by the Federal Government

Introduced by: Robert Sain, MD, for the Washtenaw County Delegation

Original Author: Robert Sain, MD

Referred to: Reference Committee C

House Action: **APPROVED AS AMENDED**

Whereas, MSMS is an organization of physicians who practice in Michigan, and

Whereas, the obligation of physicians is to address the needs of the sick and this obligation extends to the "prevention of disease" as outlined in the Hippocratic Oath¹, and

Whereas, the geographical boundaries of the sick extend beyond the limited purview of the patients who come to us for care, we in Michigan have a primary responsibility for the sick in our State, and

Whereas, we are increasingly aware that the abuse and neglect of children results in lifetime medical and behavioral outcomes, it is critical for physicians in Michigan to identify such children, and

Whereas, the separation of children from their parents, especially those age 12 and under, constitutes a major traumatic experience for each child, it sets up the experience of terror and subsequent depression - for which the only treatment is reuniting such children with their parents, and

Whereas, the Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry took official note of this in May 2018² by presenting the Academy's position on the toxic stress of children from separation from their parents, and

Whereas, Michigan's physicians are at the top of the list of mandated abuse reporters to the Michigan Department of Health and Human Services (MDHHS), as detailed in the Michigan's Child Protection Law, being Sections 722.621 through 722.638 of the Michigan Compiled Laws, and

Whereas, the Federal Government has separated thousands of children from their parents at the United States Mexican border, and

Whereas, we recognize this as child abuse conducted by government, actions which repeat the horrors of totalitarian governments such as Nazi Germany in the 1930s and 1940s, and

Whereas, the Federal government has housed some of these children with Michigan agencies such as Bethany Christian Services in Grand Rapids, and

Whereas, the standard procedure for making reports to MDHHS is narrowed to an identified victim of child abuse and neglect, this does not limit us when we do not know the names of specific children, and

Whereas, we, as citizens and physicians, each of us has a duty to preserve our democracy by fostering the ethical treatment of children and other persons by countering the arbitrary undemocratic actions of our federal, state, and local governments³, and

Whereas, MSMS and Michigan physicians have an opportunity to react to the negative actions of our governments; therefore be it

54 RESOLVED: That the MSMS support current AMA policy H-60.906, "Opposing the Detention of
55 Migrant Children," as stated:

56
57 "Opposing the Detention of Migrant Children H-60.906
58 Our AMA: (1) opposes the separation of migrant children from their families and any effort to end or
59 weaken the Flores Settlement that requires the United States Government to release undocumented
60 children "without unnecessary delay" when detention is not required for the protection or safety of
61 that child and that those children that remain in custody must be placed in the "least restrictive
62 setting" possible, such as emergency foster care; (2) supports the humane treatment of all
63 undocumented children, whether with families or not, by advocating for regular, unannounced,
64 auditing of the medical conditions and services provided at all detention facilities by a non-
65 governmental, third party with medical expertise in the care of vulnerable children; and (3) urges
66 continuity of care for migrant children released from detention facilities."
67

68
69 WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE FISCAL NOTE: \$1,000 or more for costs related to the adoption of new or
70 revised MSMS or AMA policy.
71

Relevant MSMS Policy: None

Relevant AMA Policy:

Opposing the Detention of Migrant Children H-60.906

Our AMA: (1) opposes the separation of migrant children from their families and any effort to end or weaken the Flores Settlement that requires the United States Government to release undocumented children "without unnecessary delay" when detention is not required for the protection or safety of that child and that those children that remain in custody must be placed in the "least restrictive setting" possible, such as emergency foster care; (2) supports the humane treatment of all undocumented children, whether with families or not, by advocating for regular, unannounced, auditing of the medical conditions and services provided at all detention facilities by a non-governmental, third party with medical expertise in the care of vulnerable children; and (3) urges continuity of care for migrant children released from detention facilities.

Consideration of the Health and Welfare of U.S. Minor Children in Deportation Proceedings Against Their Undocumented Parents D-60.966

Our AMA: (1) supports that the mental health, physical well-being, and welfare of U.S. citizen minors should be taken into consideration in determining whether undocumented parents of U.S. citizen minors may be detained or deported; and (2) will work with local and state medical societies and other relevant stakeholders to address the importance of considering the health and welfare of U.S. citizen minors in cases where the parents of those minors are in danger of detention or deportation.

¹ www.imaapstate.com/dwd/ima/Modern%20Hippocratic%20Oath.pdf

² www.jaacap.org/toxicstress

³ On Tyranny; Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century by Timothy Snyder (Tim Duggan's Books, New York, 2017)