

American Medical Student Association
House of Delegates 2012
Resolution: B-5

INTRODUCED BY:	Colin McCluney, Education and Advocacy Fellow; Elizabeth Wiley, Vice President for Internal Affairs; Sonia Lazreg, Health Justice Fellow; Kristin Huntoon, Health Policy Chair; Tehreem Rehman, REACH Chair; Chris Scannell, Health Care for All Co-Chair; Lindsay Martin-Engel, Grassroots Chair
SCHOOL:	University of Washington School of Medicine; George Washington University School of Medicine; Mount Sinai School of Medicine; New York College of Osteopathic Medicine; Columbia College, Columbia University; University of Southern California; University of Illinois College of Medicine)
SUBJECT:	Addition of principles regarding wealth inequality
TYPE:	Resolution of Principles

1 WHEREAS wealth inequality - the gap between rich and poor - is strongly correlated
2 with adverse health outcomes; and

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4 WHEREAS greater degrees of wealth inequality are associated with worse health
5 outcomes for the population as a whole¹; and

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7 WHEREAS reductions in wealth inequality can have a greater influence on health than
8 medical interventions²; and

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10 WHEREAS the minimum wage has fallen about 30% in real terms since its peak in 1968
11 and a full-time job at minimum wage is below the federal poverty level³; and

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13 WHEREAS wealth inequality is worsening in the United States and the gap between rich
14 and poor is at its greatest level since before the Great Depression, and U.S. wealth
15 inequality is greater than any other advanced industrial country⁴; and

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17 WHEREAS progressive taxation models can serve to reduce wealth inequality while
18 regressive systems tend to worsen wealth inequality^{5,6,7,8}; and

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20 WHEREAS the Association is dedicated to improving the health of all the world's
21 citizens

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23 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Principles Regarding Health Equity be**
24 **EDITED BY ADDITION between items "3. REGARDING Social Determinants of**

25 **Health” and “4. REGARDING Quality of Care” to include:**

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27 4. REGARDING Wealth Inequality

28 a) RECOGNIZES that greater degrees of wealth inequality are correlated with
29 poorer health outcomes for whole populations.

30 b) SUPPORTS policies that reduce wealth inequality while creating
31 opportunities for advancement and rewarding societal contributions.

32 c) ENCOURAGES adoption of progressive tax policies at the federal, state and
33 local levels that adequately fund government to provide a robust social safety
34 net while reducing the burden on the most vulnerable populations; to include

35 i) SUPPORT for a financial transaction tax on speculative investments

36 ii) SUPPORT for a graded income tax system

37 iii) OPPOSITION to regressive sales taxes on essential goods

38 iv) SUPPORT for progressive taxes on wealth rather than on income

39 d) STRONGLY SUPPORTS increasing the federal minimum wage to a living
40 wage

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43 FISCAL NOTE: None

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46 REFERENCES:

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48 ¹<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277953605004375>

49 ²<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277953605004375>

50 ³<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0277953605004375>

51 ⁴<http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1475-4991.1996.tb00193.x/abstract>

52 ⁵<http://www.econ.umn.edu/~vr0j/papers/max.pdf>

53 ⁶<http://bostonreview.net/BR21.1/wolff.html>

54 ⁷<http://www.econ.umn.edu/~vr0j/papers/max.pdf>

55 ⁸<http://www.cepr.net/index.php/publications/reports/the-benefits-of-a-financial-transactions-tax/>