

AMERICAN MEDICAL STUDENT ASSOCIATION
HOUSE OF DELEGATES 2017
RESOLUTION: A13

INTRODUCED BY: Allison Hare, Community & Public Health Programming Coordinator, Community & Public Health Action Committee; Sindhu Battula, AMSA Member; Tanya Khan, Community & Public Health Advocacy Coordinator, Community & Public Health Action Committee; Mallika Sabharwal, Chair, Community & Public Health Action Committee; Diana Huang, Vice President for Programming Development

SCHOOL: University of Wisconsin-Madison; University of Wisconsin-Madison; Northeast Ohio Medical University; University of Louisville School of Medicine; Lewis Katz School of Medicine at Temple University

SUBJECT: Amendment to Principles Regarding the Environment - Environmental Justice

TYPE: Resolution of Principles

1 WHEREAS AMSA resolved in 2004 to support that human rights are applicable to all
2 individuals, regardless of sex, health status, race, ethnicity, religion, beliefs, politics, or other
3 characteristics.

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5 WHEREAS AMSA resolved to support anti-pollution programs, publicity and legislation with its
6 enforcement to reduce industrial and environmental health hazards and to correct pollution
7 problems.

8
9 WHEREAS violations of human rights and environmental injustices are inextricably interwoven,
10 as human rights cannot be secured in a degraded environment. The fundamental rights to life and
11 health are threatened by environmental issues including soil degradation, deforestation, and
12 exposures to toxic chemicals, hazardous wastes, and contaminated drinking water. (1)

13
14 WHEREAS decades of unequal distribution of pollution and other environmental risks by race
15 and class have been documented. For example, socioeconomically disadvantaged residents near
16 oil pipelines have experienced a variety of health issues, including migraines, painful rashes,
17 breathing complications, nausea, chemical sensitivities, and exacerbated cancer activity. Toxic
18 waste dumps are disproportionately located in low SES communities, which many studies have
19 shown leads to higher rates of cancer development in these communities. Finally, the prevalence

of asthma and other conditions caused by exposure to environmental factors has been shown to be significantly higher in minority and low-income populations within the United States. (2, 3, 4)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Principles on the Environment (p. 121-123) be AMENDED BY ADDITION to state:

The American Medical Student Association:

15. In regard to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies:

- a. BELIEVES that all persons have the right to fair and meaningful involvement in the creation of such policies, regardless of their race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, religious or political affiliation, or socioeconomic status;
- b. OPPOSES efforts to disproportionately burden members of society with pollution or other environmental hazards based on their race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, religious or political affiliation, or socioeconomic status without their knowing consent.

FISCAL NOTE: None

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REFERENCES:

- (1) Adeola, F. O. (2000, January). Cross-national environmental injustice and humans rights issues. *American Behavioral Scientist*, 43(4), 686-706. Retrieved December 8, 2016.
- (2) Mohai, P., Pellow, D., Roberts, J. T. (2009). Environmental Justice. *Annual Review of Environment and Resources*, 34(1), 405–430.
- (3) Phillips, B. (2016, August 9). Oil Pipelines and Spills. Retrieved December 8, 2016, from <http://cla.auburn.edu/ces/energy/oil-pipelines-and-spills/>
- (4) Massey, R. (2001). Environmental Justice: Income, Race, and Health. *International Journal of Sustainability in Higher Education*, 2(3), 288-289.

REPORT OF REFERENCE COMMITTEE A

DISCUSSION

BOT: Adopt as amended

- a. BELIEVES that all persons have the right to fair and meaningful involvement in the development ~~creation~~ of such policies, regardless of their race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, religious or political affiliation, ~~sexual or gender identity~~, or socioeconomic status;
- b. OPPOSES efforts to disproportionately burden members of society with pollution or other environmental hazards based on their race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, religious or political affiliation, ~~sexual or gender identity~~, or socioeconomic status. ~~without their knowing consent.~~

BRD: N/A

PRD: Recommend to adopt as written

IRD: recommends to adopt as written

ACTE: Amends the following

- 15a) “believes that all persons have the right to fair and meaningful involvement in the creation of such policies, regardless of their identities.”
- 15b) “opposes efforts to disproportionately burden members of society with pollution or other environmental hazards based on their identities.”

Premedical Caucus: N/A

Other Groups: Northeast Ohio School of Medicine AMSA representative recommended to adopt as written

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION:

PROS: Amendments of groups are working towards increasing the amount minorities or groups that are protected with this resolution, while keeping the intent of the resolution the same.

CONS: Inclusivity needed to be expanded upon within the resolution

REFERENCE COMMITTEE COMMENTS:

ACTE illuminated that identity is necessary as an overarching and more inclusive than listing individual aspects that may or may not make up a person’s identity. Both ACTE and BOT are working towards including all minority groups, including those that may not yet be recognized.

1 out of 4 reference committee member disagrees. Further clarification is necessary to identity for the context of the term can be vague with respect to relevance to PPP.

REFERENCE COMMITTEE RECOMMENDATION:

Adopt as amended

- c. BELIEVES that all persons have the right to fair and meaningful involvement in the development creation of such policies, regardless of their race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, religious or political affiliation, or socioeconomic status; identities.
- d. OPPOSES efforts to disproportionately burden members of society with pollution or other environmental hazards based on their race, color, creed, national origin, ancestry, religious or political affiliation, or socioeconomic status without their knowing consent identities.