

MEDCHI, THE MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY  
HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution 44-18

INTRODUCED BY: Medical Student Section  
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SUBJECT: Opposing Child Separation from Caregivers

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1 Whereas, since Trump signed his “zero tolerance” immigration policy into effect in April of  
2 2018, more than 2,000 children have been separated from their families at the U.S.-Mexico  
3 border<sup>1</sup>; and  
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5 Whereas, in July 2018, a child reportedly died after being released from an Immigration and  
6 Customs Enforcement facility<sup>7</sup>; and  
7

8 Whereas, there will be difficulty in reuniting all families with government lawyers stating that  
9 they were not able to locate the parents of 38 detained migrant children under the age of 5 years  
10 old<sup>9</sup>; and  
11

12 Whereas, this population has already experienced toxic stress from the journey to the American  
13 border, poverty, and/or violence; and  
14

15 Whereas, cumulative adversity experienced in childhood can have negative health effects in  
16 adulthood, including an increased risk of early death<sup>2</sup>; and  
17

18 Whereas, the absence of caregivers interacting and providing responsive relationships is a  
19 serious threat to a child's brain development and well-being<sup>8</sup>; and  
20

21 Whereas, children separated from their parents at a young age have been shown to have  
22 significantly lower IQ later in life and an altered stress response<sup>3</sup>; and  
23

24 Whereas, Maryland groups have been caring for children separated from their families at the  
25 border<sup>4</sup>; and  
26

27 Whereas, Maryland was part of a joint lawsuit with 17 other states against the Trump  
28 administration's for its policy on family separation<sup>5</sup>; and  
29

30 Whereas, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan withdrew National Guard Unit from the border in  
31 response and protest to the family separation policy<sup>6</sup>; and  
32

33 Whereas, several organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, American  
34 Psychological Association, American College of Physicians, American Academy of Child and  
35 Adolescent Psychiatry, and American Public Health Association have released statements  
36 recommending that the administration abandon the “zero-tolerance” policy due to potential long-  
37 term consequences<sup>10-11</sup>; and  
38

39 Whereas, AMA policy H-440.818 takes a stance against policies that separation of children from  
40 their caregivers; therefore be it

41  
42 Resolved, that MedChi officially oppose the separation of children from their caregivers in the  
43 absence threats to the child’s well-being; and be it further

44  
45 Resolved, that MedChi support Maryland’s efforts to repeal federal policy requiring the  
46 separation of migrating children from their families.  
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49 As amended and adopted by the House of Delegates at its meeting on September 22, 2018.  
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88 **Relevant AMA policy:**

89 **Separation of Children From Their Caregivers at Border H-440.818**

90 Our AMA will: (1) oppose the practice of separating migrating children from their caregivers in the absence of  
91 immediate physical or emotional threats to the child’s well-being; and (2) urge the federal government to withdraw  
92 its policy of requiring separation of migrating children from their caregivers, and instead, give priority to supporting  
93 families and protecting the health and well-being of the children within those families.