MEDCHI, THE MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY
HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution 44-18

INTRODUCED BY: Medical Student Section
Kori Porosnicu Rodriguez, John Michel, Neha Anand,
Ved Tanavde, Pauline Huynh

SUBJECT: Opposing Child Separation from Caregivers

Whereas, since Trump signed his “zero tolerance” immigration policy into effect in April of
2018, more than 2,000 children have been separated from their families at the U.S.-Mexico
border; and

Whereas, in July 2018, a child reportedly died after being released from an Immigration and
Customs Enforcement facility; and

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

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

Whereas, cumulative adversity experienced in childhood can have negative health effects in
adulthood, including an increased risk of early death; and

Whereas, the absence of caregivers interacting and providing responsive relationships is a
serious threat to a child's brain development and well-being; and

Whereas, children separated from their parents at a young age have been shown to have
significantly lower IQ later in life and an altered stress response; and

Whereas, Maryland groups have been caring for children separated from their families at the
border; and

Whereas, Maryland was part of a joint lawsuit with 17 other states against the Trump
administration’s for its policy on family separation; and

Whereas, Maryland Governor Larry Hogan withdrew National Guard Unit from the border in
response and protest to the family separation policy; and
Whereas, several organizations such as the American Academy of Pediatrics, American Psychological Association, American College of Physicians, American Academy of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, and American Public Health Association have released statements recommending that the administration abandon the “zero-tolerance” policy due to potential long-term consequences; and

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

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

Resolved, that MedChi support Maryland’s efforts to repeal federal policy requiring the separation of migrating children from their families.

As amended and adopted by the House of Delegates at its meeting on September 22, 2018.

References


Relevant AMA policy:
Separation of Children From Their Caregivers at Border H-440.818

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