MEDCHI, THE MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY  
HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
Resolution 4-13

INTRODUCED BY: Queen Anne’s County Medical Society  
SUBJECT: Healthy School Lunch Policy

Whereas, a healthy diet helps children stay alert during class, fight off illnesses, and grow into strong, healthy adults; and

Whereas, in Maryland 28.8% of children considered either overweight or obese, therefore at higher risk of developing health problems, including heart disease, diabetes, asthma, and cancer; and

Whereas, school aged children get up to half the food they need each day at school; and

Whereas, schools are a great place to learn about good nutrition and healthy eating habits which may impact the rest of their lives; and

Whereas, the (USDA) is offering new guidelines effective in 2012 will make school meals healthier; and

Whereas, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Cancer Society, the American Dietetic Association, the American Diabetes Association, the American Heart Association, and the National Institutes of Health recommend that there be greater emphasis in the American diet on fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes with a reduction in consumption of animal foods; and

Whereas, fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and legumes are generally lower in fat and calories than meat and dairy products, contain no cholesterol, and promote good health because they contain fiber and essential nutrients, including vitamins and minerals, and they also contain phytochemicals and antioxidants that may provide additional protection to reduce the risk of some forms of cancer, heart disease, obesity, diabetes, high blood pressure, and other degenerative diseases; and

Whereas, a significant percentage of children who rely on free or reduced price school lunches are considered particularly ‘‘at risk’’ for these diet-related degenerative diseases; and diet-related diseases take a disproportionate toll among ethnic minorities; and

Whereas, children with poor eating habits are at a disadvantage if no plant-centered school lunch meals are offered daily in their respective schools; and the American Dietetic Association has stated that it is their position that appropriately planned plant-centered diets are healthy and
nutritionally adequate and that scientific data suggest positive relationships between plant-centered diets and risk reduction for several chronic degenerative diseases and conditions, including obesity, coronary artery disease, hypertension, diabetes mellitus, and some types of cancer; therefore be it

Resolved, that MedChi study our policy with regard to School lunches with an emphasis on examining effective practices in schools which would have a positive impact on students’ nutrition, health, and physical well-being that are affordable and promote the long-term health, life-long learning, and overall well-being of our children. A report at the next House of Delegates with a study and recommendations for possible legislative action in 2014 would be expected.

As adopted by the House of Delegates at its April 27, 2013 meeting.