

MEDCHI, THE MARYLAND STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY  
HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution 32-15

INTRODUCED BY: Public Health Committee

SUBJECT: Global Climate Change

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1 Whereas, the Fifth Assessment of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, made  
2 up of over 2500 of the world’s leading scientists, concludes, “Warming of the climate system is  
3 unequivocal, and since the 1950s, many of the observed changes are unprecedented over decades to  
4 millennia. The atmosphere and ocean have warmed, the amounts of snow and ice have diminished, and  
5 sea level has risen;”<sup>xi</sup> and  
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7 Whereas, the Fifth Assessment also concludes, “Human influence has been detected in warming of the  
8 atmosphere and the ocean, in changes in the global water cycle, in reductions in snow and ice, and in  
9 global mean sea level rise; and it is extremely likely to have been the dominant cause of the observed  
10 warming since the mid- 20th century;”<sup>ii</sup> and  
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12 Whereas, climate models show that global mean temperatures will likely increase by 1.5 to 2 degrees  
13 Celsius within the next 20-35 years;<sup>iii</sup> and  
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15 Whereas , climate models project that by 2100 the average U.S. temperature will increase by about 4°F to  
16 11°F;<sup>iv</sup> and  
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18 Whereas, some of the ways a warmer world will increase health risks are from: extreme weather events;  
19 heat stress; air pollution; allergies; water pollution; and, infectious disease;<sup>v</sup> and  
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21 Whereas, the 2015 Lancet Commission on Health and Climate Change observes that the effects of climate  
22 change are being felt today, and future projections represent an unacceptably high and potentially  
23 catastrophic risk to human health;<sup>vi</sup> and  
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25 Whereas, the American Medical Association, Resolution H-135.938 Global Climate Change and Human  
26 Health, supports the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change’s fourth assessment  
27 report and concurs with the scientific consensus that the Earth is undergoing adverse global  
28 climate change and that anthropogenic contributions are significant; and  
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30 Whereas, because of its long coast line and sizable farming community, Maryland is one of the states’  
31 most vulnerable to climate change;<sup>vii</sup> and  
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33 Whereas, a leading contributor to the acceleration of climate change is the continuing use of fossil fuels  
34 for energy;<sup>viii</sup> and

35 Whereas, the combustion of fossil fuels releases not only carbon dioxide, a gas that causes climate  
36 change, but is a major cause of toxic air, ozone and fine particulate matter pollution; and

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Whereas, the combustion of fossil fuels results in severe respiratory problems, heart attacks, lung cancer and increased mortality particularly for vulnerable populations such as the young, the poor the elderly, and those with chronic illnesses; therefore be it

Resolved, that MedChi adopts the AMA position H-135.938 as our own policy on climate change.

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As amended and adopted by the House of Delegates at its meeting on September 19, 2015.

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<sup>i</sup> IPCC, 2014: Climate Change 2014: Synthesis Report. Contribution of Working Groups I, II and III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change [Core Writing Team, R.K. Pachauri and L.A. Meyer (eds.)]. IPCC, Geneva, Switzerland, 151 pp.

[http://ar5-syr.ipcc.ch/ipcc/ipcc/resources/pdf/IPCC\\_SynthesisReport.pdf](http://ar5-syr.ipcc.ch/ipcc/ipcc/resources/pdf/IPCC_SynthesisReport.pdf), p.40

<sup>ii</sup> p.47

<sup>iii</sup> UNEP/WMO (2011). Integrated Assessment of Black Carbon and Tropospheric Ozone: Summary for Decision Makers. United Nations Environmental Program (UNEP), UNON/Publishing Services Section/Nairobi, ISO 14001:2004-certified, IPCC (2013). Climate Change 2013: The Physical Science Basis. Contribution of Working Group I to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA, 1535 pp

<sup>iv</sup> [1] USGCRP (2009). *Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States* Thomas R. Karl, Jerry M. Melillo, and Thomas C. Peterson (eds.). United States Global Change Research Program. Cambridge University Press, New York, NY, USA.

<sup>v</sup> WHO, Climate change and health, Fact sheet N°266, Reviewed August 2014, <http://www.who.int/mediacentre/factsheets/fs266/en/>

<sup>vi</sup> [http://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736\(15\)60854-6.pdf](http://www.thelancet.com/pdfs/journals/lancet/PIIS0140-6736(15)60854-6.pdf)

<sup>vii</sup> <http://www.mde.state.md.us/programs/air/climatechange/pages/air/climatechange/index.aspx>

<sup>viii</sup> <http://www.globalchange.gov/climate-change/whats-happening-why>