RESOLUTION 17-503

(Referred to Reference Committee E)

Subject: Practicing Physician Declining Membership Analysis

Introduced by: Natalia Ortiz, MD, on behalf of the Philadelphia County Medical Society

Author: Kurt Miceli, MD, Philadelphia County Medical Society

WHEREAS, the total number of U.S. physicians 40 years and older (Life Stage categories “Mature” and “Senior,” based on the AMA Physician Masterfile) increased from 741,495 in December 2010 to 793,189 in June 2017;¹ ² and

WHEREAS, the total number of non-AMA U.S. physicians 40 years and older (Life Stage categories “Mature” and “Senior,” based on the AMA Physician Masterfile) increased from 622,991 in December 2010 to 684,003 in June 2017;¹ ² and

WHEREAS, U.S. physicians in Life Stage categories “Mature” and “Senior” (based on the AMA Physician Masterfile) represent the majority of practicing physicians (specifically 61.8% of all U.S. physicians and medical students);² and

WHEREAS, the American Medical Association’s (AMA’s) membership for physicians 40 years and older (Life Stage categories “Mature” and “Senior,” based on the AMA Physician Masterfile) declined from 118,504 in December 2010 to 109,186 in June 2017;¹ ² and

WHEREAS, the percentage of total U.S. physicians 40 years and older (Life Stage categories “Mature” and “Senior,” based on the AMA Physician Masterfile) who were members of the AMA in December 2010 was 15.98%;¹ and

WHEREAS, the percentage of total U.S. physicians 40 years and older (Life Stage categories “Mature” and “Senior,” based on the AMA Physician Masterfile) who were members of the AMA in June 2017 declined to 13.77%;² and

WHEREAS, the rate of growth of “Young” physician members to the AMA (those under 40 years old or in their first eight years of practice) [24.1% from December 2010 to June 2017] was less than the rate of growth of Young physicians in the United States [27.5% from December 2010 to June 2017];¹ ² and

WHEREAS, physician membership to the AMA decreased from 16.0% of all physicians to 15.6% of all physicians from December 2010 to July 2017;¹ ² and

WHEREAS, membership dues for the AMA from 2014 to 2015 decreased from $40.4 million to $39.5 million;³ and

WHEREAS, membership dues for the AMA from 2015 to 2016 decreased from $39.5 million to $39.1 million; and

WHEREAS, the AMA states that it advocates on behalf of physicians and aims to be the voice of physicians; and

WHEREAS, the AMA has as its mission to “promote the art and science of medicine and the betterment of public health;” and

WHEREAS, the AMA has supported physician membership drive campaigns in the past noting that “Together We are Stronger;” and

WHEREAS, a clear discrepancy exists between declines in AMA membership for the majority of practicing physicians and the AMA’s intent to be the voice of physicians; and

WHEREAS, reasons for this discrepancy need to be understood and acted upon so that membership declines in practicing physicians can be reversed for the strength and financial health of the organization as well as the larger voice of physicians in the country; and

WHEREAS, it is in the interest of any membership organization to represent a substantial portion of the individuals it claims to represent, therefore be it;

RESOLVED, that the Pennsylvania Medical Society (PAMED) petition the American Medical Association (AMA) to study the reasons for membership decline among practicing physicians in Life Stage categories “Mature” and “Senior” by proportionally surveying both members and non-members in these categories as to the reasons why or why not individuals are members; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that PAMED petition the AMA to study the reasons for the relatively slow growth of membership in the “Young” physician category as such growth in membership lags behind the growth rate of this group at large; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that any such survey examine a variety of concerns physicians may have with regard to the AMA, its attention to its mission, its adequacy in advocating for physicians, any political bias which may be dissuading individuals from remaining or becoming members, and possible solutions for the foregoing concerns; and, be it further

RESOLVED, that this survey be undertaken immediately by an independent consulting company with expertise in membership engagement and reported to the AMA House of Delegates at the 2018 Annual Meeting and made available to the AMA membership at large at that time.

Fiscal Note: $2,500-$5000

---

5 http://www.ama-assn.org/ama
7 http://www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/about-ama.page
1 Relevance to Strategic Plan
2
3 503