Whereas, The chemical industry is an important industry in the US, and its contributions to health and human development are widely recognized, and the global scale of industrial chemical production is immense and is expected to grow four-fold by 2050; and

Whereas, Many chemicals that are useful to society are also known to be hazardous to human biology, particularly in utero and in developing children; and

Whereas, The California Medical Association and the Washington State Medical Association recently called upon our AMA to request that the US implement a modern, comprehensive chemicals policy in line with current scientific knowledge on human health, and requiring a full evaluation of the health impacts of both newly developed and existing industrial chemicals now; and

Whereas, There are long-standing deficiencies in the federal regulation of industrial chemicals, most notably in the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), and the University of California (UC) documented in a March 2006 report to the California Legislature that TSCA’s deficiencies have produced several gaps. These include a US chemical Data Gap (defined in the report as insufficient information on the toxicity of the vast majority of chemicals in commercial circulation), Safety Gap (insurance that the production and use of goods does not come at the expense of public and environmental health), and Technology Gap (concerns that the vast majority of chemical products are manufactured in the US using technologies developed 40 to 50 years ago); and

Whereas, The UC report, prepared by a multidisciplinary group of experts, illustrates that these gaps have prevented public agencies from effectively assessing the hazards of the great majority of chemicals in commercial circulation or controlling those of greatest concern, and that these Gaps are adversely affecting public, occupational, and environmental health, as well as business, industry, and government; and

Whereas, On a global level "fundamental changes are needed in the way that societies manage chemicals." Environment Ministers, Health Ministers and other delegates from over 100 governments together with representatives of civil society and the private sector declared in Dubai, February 6, 2006, that "the environment worldwide continues to suffer from air, water and land contamination, impairing the health and welfare of millions." They adopted the
Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), a global plan of action whose stated goal is: "to achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment"; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association encourage the training of medical students about the health effects of toxic exposures on patients (New HOD Policy); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA call upon Congress to craft and implement a modern, comprehensive chemicals policy, to (1) Close the Data Gap by improving the efficiency of the chemicals market by implementing measures that improve the flow of information regarding toxicity from chemical producers to businesses, consumers, workers, and government agencies; (2) Close the Safety Gap by reducing the commercial circulation of the most hazardous chemicals by identifying those of greatest concern and implementing measures that motivate businesses to reduce their usage and improve the safety of their usage of these substances through toxics use reduction and other relevant strategies; and (3) Close the Technology Gap by introducing a range of other incentives to encourage businesses to invest in green chemistry innovation, and by supporting "green" chemistry research and education (Directive to Take Action); and be it further

RESOLVED: That our AMA carry this resolution to the World Medical Association urging involvement in the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM) process leading to the sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that minimize adverse effects on human health and the environment. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Implement accordingly at estimated staff cost of $4,365.

Received: 05/07/08
Whereas, A California Medical Association Resolution 712-07 reads:

RESOLVED: That the CMA calls upon the State of California and United States to implement a modern, comprehensive chemicals policy in line with current scientific knowledge on human health, and which requires a full evaluation of the health impacts of both newly developed and existing industrial chemicals now in use;

RESOLVED: That this matter be referred for national action (AMA); and

Whereas, In 2007, a Washington State Medical Association resolution encouraged safer chemicals policies and regulatory reform of industrial chemicals to protect and improve human life, as follows:

RESOLVED, that the WSMA supports Washington State legislative efforts to protect the public, particularly children, from harmful chemicals in consumer products, to reduce the burden of toxic exposure and improve public health for Washington's citizens; and

Whereas, The Illinois State Medical Society has several policies related to the chemical health hazards, including 1) the need to reduce and eventually eliminate mercury use in health care facilities, 2) the design and construction of environmentally friendly hospital facilities by eliminating the use of toxic paints, adhesives, carpeting, and other hazardous materials, 3) opposition to new or expansion of existing hazardous waste landfills over aquifers; and 4) development of national environmental contaminant bio-monitoring programs to track harmful chemicals and toxic agents; and

Whereas, The global scale of industrial chemical production is immense and is expected to grow four-fold by 2050, and the chemical industry is an important industry in the United States, and its contributions to health and human development are widely recognized; and

Whereas, Many chemicals that are useful to society are also known to be hazardous to human biology, particularly in utero and in developing children; and
Whereas, There are long-standing deficiencies in the federal regulation of industrial chemicals, most notably in the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA); and, the University of California (UC) documented in a March 2006 report to the California Legislature that TSCA’s deficiencies have produced a chemical Data Gap, Safety Gap, and Technology Gap in the United States; and

Whereas, The UC report, prepared by a multidisciplinary group of experts, illustrates that these gaps have prevented public agencies from effectively assessing the hazards of the great majority of chemicals in commercial circulation or controlling those of greatest concern, and that these Gaps are adversely affecting public, occupational, and environmental health, as well as business, industry, and government; and

Whereas, On a global level fundamental changes are needed in the way that societies manage chemicals; and

Whereas, Environment ministers, health ministers and other delegates from over 100 governments, together with representatives of civil society and the private sector, declared in Dubai, February 6, 2006, that “the environment worldwide continues to suffer from air, water and land contamination, impairing the health and welfare of millions”; and

Whereas, The Dubai group adopted the Strategic Approach to International Chemicals Management (SAICM), a global plan of action whose stated goal is: “to achieve the sound management of chemicals throughout their life-cycle so that, by 2020, chemicals are used and produced in ways that lead to the minimization of significant adverse effects on human health and the environment”; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association gather all stakeholders to craft and develop a modern, comprehensive national chemicals policy. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Estimated cost of $29,500 to convene a group of approximately 20 stakeholders to develop report.

Received: 04/30/08
Whereas, The state, national, and global scale of industrial chemical production is immense and is expected to grow four-fold by 2050, and the chemical industry is an important industry with wide contributions to health and human development; and

Whereas, Ever-expanding research confirms that many chemicals that are useful to society are also known to be hazardous to human biology and health, particularly in utero and in developing children; and

Whereas, For new and existing medications, the US Food and Drug Administration has long required pre-approval evaluation of safety as well as efficacy, and many industrial chemicals with known impacts on human biology are present in human bodies at levels similar to active doses of medications; and

Whereas, Numerous other nations including Canada and the European Union are adopting more proactive health-oriented chemical policies, based upon scientific knowledge, assessment, and accepted public health principles; and

Whereas, There are long-standing deficiencies in the federal regulation of industrial chemicals, most notably in the Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA), as confirmed by the National Academy of Sciences and others, and the University of California documented in a 2006 report to the California Legislature that TSCA’s deficiencies are important and can be remedied; and

Whereas, These problems include the projected appearance of 600 new hazardous waste sites each month in the US over the next 25 years; the appearance of hundreds of industrial chemicals in human tissues and fluids, including those of infants; and the development of chronic diseases caused by chemical exposures on the job among 23,000 California workers each year; and

Whereas, The American Public Health Association’s (APHA) leadership has recently endorsed a policy titled “Calling on the U.S. Congress to Restructure the Toxic Substances Control Act and Implement a Modern, Comprehensive Chemicals Policy,” to be considered for adoption at the annual APHA meeting in November; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association call upon the United States government to implement a national modern, comprehensive chemicals policy in line with current scientific
knowledge on human health, and which requires a full evaluation of the health impacts of both newly developed and existing industrial chemicals now in use. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Implement accordingly at estimated staff cost of $4,580.

Received: 04/18/08

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

D-135.997 Research into the Environmental Contributors to Disease

Our AMA will (1) advocate for greater public and private funding for research into the environmental causes of disease, and urge the National Academy of Sciences to undertake an authoritative analysis of environmental causes of disease; and (2) ask the steering committee of the Medicine and Public Health Initiative Coalition to consider environmental contributors to disease as a priority public health issue. (Res. 402, A-03)

H-55.990 Cancer Risk of Pesticides in Agricultural Workers

The AMA: (1) urges the EPA and other responsible state and federal regulatory agencies to continue their efforts at safeguarding human and environmental health, and especially the health of agricultural workers who may be exposed to pesticides; (2) urges physicians to utilize the resources of local or regional poison control centers or the National Pesticide Information Center for the composition and toxicity of specific pesticides; and (3) through its scientific journals and publications, supports alerting physicians to the potential hazards of agricultural pesticides. (CSA Rep. B, I-87; Reaffirmed by CSA Rep. 4 - I-94; Reaffirmation I-96; Reaffirmed and Modified: CSAPH Rep. 3, A-06)

H-135.951 Environmental Chemical and Disease Tracking and Reduction

Our AMA urges that the primary findings of the 2003 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report on chemicals be widely disseminated to physicians and patients for education regarding the impact on public health; and urges the CDC to consider implementation of a program similar to the Environmental Health Tracking Network. (Res. 414, A-03)

H-135.954 Education and Prevention Programs Regarding Air Pollution Impact on Body Organs and Systems

The AMA will provide leadership and participate in a major air pollution education and prevention program carried out by the health care community, in cooperation with environmental organizations and business, to inform patients and the public of the negative health effects of indoor and outdoor air pollution on the organs and systems of the body. (Res. 404, I-95; Reaffirmed: CSA Rep. 8, A-05; Reaffirmation I-06)

H-135.956 Human and Environmental Health Impacts of Chlorinated Chemicals

The AMA: (1) encourages the Environmental Protection Agency to base its evaluations of the potential public health and environmental risks posed by exposure to an individual chlorinated organic compound, other industrial compound, or manufacturing process on reliable data specific to that compound or process; (2) encourages the chemical industry to increase knowledge of the environmental behavior, bioaccumulation potential, and toxicology of their products and by-products; and (3) supports the implementation of risk reduction practices by the chemical and manufacturing industries. (Sub. Res. 503, A-94; Reaffirmation I-98)
H-135.997 Promoting Environmental Health


AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

Resolution: 427
(A-08)

Introduced by: Washington Delegation

Subject: Encouraging Safer Chemicals Policies and Regulatory Reform of Industrial Chemicals to Protect and Improve Human Health

Referred to: Reference Committee D
(Robert T. M. Phillips, MD, PhD, Chair)

Whereas, The US chemical industry designs, produces, and imports 42 billion pounds of chemical substances per day with global production growing a projected four-fold by 2050; and

Whereas, Many of these substances useful to society are also known to be hazardous to human biology and ecological systems, with harmful chemical exposures posing the greatest threat to children and women before and through reproductive age, impacting children’s health, development, behavior and learning, with exposures to neurotoxic chemicals in critical child development periods linked to lifelong deficits in brain function; and

Whereas, The federal Toxic Substances Control Act (TSCA) of 1976 (P.L. 94-469), broadly intended to enable regulation of chemicals both before and after they enter commerce--has, according to multiple independent analyses, fallen short of its objectives and consequently not served as an effective vehicle for the public, industry, or government to assess the hazards of chemicals in commerce or control those of greatest health concern; and

Whereas, These market conditions have failed to safeguard health, creating problems that include the appearance of hundreds of industrial chemicals in human tissues and fluids including the cord blood of infants; the development of chronic diseases and premature death related to chemical exposures in the workplace; and disproportionate risks due to chemical exposures among members of minority, immigrant, and low-income communities; and

Whereas, AMA-stated policy “supports the implementation of risk reduction practices by the chemical and manufacturing industries”; therefore be it
RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association support restructuring of the Toxic Substances Control Act to: 1) require chemical producers to provide comprehensive chemical hazard information in forms that are appropriate for use by the public, workers, industry, and government; 2) serve as a vehicle to help federal and state agencies to efficiently assess the human and environmental hazards of chemicals in commercial use and reduce the use of those of greatest concern; and 3) introduce complementary federal mechanisms to motivate investment, education, and research in safer (‘green’) chemical technology. (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Implement accordingly at estimated staff cost of $4,365.
Received: 05/07/08

RELEVANT AMA POLICY

H-135.956 Human and Environmental Health Impacts of Chlorinated Chemicals
The AMA: (1) encourages the Environmental Protection Agency to base its evaluations of the potential public health and environmental risks posed by exposure to an individual chlorinated organic compound, other industrial compound, or manufacturing process on reliable data specific to that compound or process; (2) encourages the chemical industry to increase knowledge of the environmental behavior, bioaccumulation potential, and toxicology of their products and by-products; and (3) supports the implementation of risk reduction practices by the chemical and manufacturing industries. (Sub. Res. 503, A-94; Reaffirmation I-98)
135.956.HTM&s_t=chemicals&catg=AMA/HnE&catg=AMA/BnGnC&catg=AMA/DJR&&nth=1&&st_p=0&nth=2) (accessed May 11, 2007). American Medical Association: Chicago, IL.