

SUBJECT: Climate Change

SUBMITTED BY: Michigan Association of Osteopathic Family Physicians and the Student Association of the ACOFP

REFERRED TO: 2021 American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP) Congress of Delegates (*submitted in 2020*)

RESOLUTION NO. 12

- 1 WHEREAS, the United States National Aeronautics and Space Administration defines climate change as a
2 range of global patterns including global warming, sea level rise, ice mass loss, shifts in flower/plant
3 blooming and extreme weather events (1); and
- 4 WHEREAS, international studies have identified several consequences of climate change including
5 heatwaves, storms, fires, droughts, floods, and agriculture loss as the sources of changing patterns of
6 disease leading to health-related consequences, such as an increase in undernutrition, cardiovascular
7 disease, respiratory disease, and vector borne disease (2); and
- 8 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization 2014 assessment estimated an additional 250,000 potential
9 deaths annually between 2030 and 2050 for well understood impacts of climate change including 38,000
10 due to heat exposure in the elderly, 48,000 due to diarrhea, 60,000 due to malaria, 95,000 due to childhood
11 undernutrition (3); and
- 12 WHEREAS, longitudinal studies in the United States measuring particulate matter pollution have found
13 association with lower life expectancy for both US men and women (4), an increase in dementia incidence
14 and changes in mental acuity (5), and an increase in incidence of preterm labor with rising temperatures
15 (6); and
- 16 WHEREAS, American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) has a policy statement acknowledging the
17 public health effects of pollution and climate change, supports strong action to reduce pollution, and
18 promotes communication with policy makers regarding climate change policy (7); and
- 19 WHEREAS, The American College of Physicians (ACP) has a position paper recognizing the health effects of
20 climate change and supports efforts to mitigate climate change as a public health need (8); and
- 21 WHEREAS, The United States Surgeon General is responsible for publishing reports regarding important
22 public health issues such as tobacco use, suicide prevention, and substance use disorder; now, therefore be
23 it
- 24 RESOLVED, that American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP) draft a white paper
25 recognizing the negative public health effects of climate change and submit it for consideration at ACOFP
26 Congress of Delegates 2022; and, be it further
- 27 RESOLVED, that the ACOFP Board draft a letter encouraging the US Surgeon General to publish education
28 addressing the health-related consequences of climate change following adoption of the white paper.

FINAL ACTION: APPROVED as of March 10, 2021

References:

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2. Watts, Nick, et al. "Health and Climate Change: Policy Responses to Protect Public Health." *The Lancet*, 386(10006):1861-914. 7 Nov 2015. <<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/26111439>>.
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4. Bennett JE, Tamura-Wicks H, Parks RM, Burnett RT, Pope CA III, Bechle MJ, et al. "Particulate matter air pollution and national and county life expectancy loss in the USA: A spatiotemporal analysis." *PLoS Med* 16(7). 23 July 2019. <<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pmed.1002856>>.
5. Diana Younan, Andrew J Petkus, Keith F Widaman, et al. "Particulate matter and episodic memory decline mediated by early neuroanatomic biomarkers of Alzheimer's disease". *Brain*, Volume 143, Issue 1; Pages 289–302. January 2020. <<https://doi.org/10.1093/brain/awz348>>.
6. Barreca, A., Schaller, J. "The impact of high ambient temperatures on delivery timing and gestational lengths." *Nature Climate Change* 10(1). January 2020. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/337699127_The_impact_of_high_ambient_temperatures_on_delivery_timing_and_gestational_lengths>.
7. American Academy of Family Physicians Policies, 2019 COD. <<https://www.aafp.org/about/policies/all/climate-pollution.html>>.
8. Crowley, R., BSJ, "Climate Change and Health: A Position Paper of the American College of Physicians." *Annals of Internal Medicine*. 3 May 2016.