



## RESOLUTION WRITING GUIDELINES

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### CONTENT OF A RESOLUTION

Every resolution must have a title, "whereas" clause(s), and "resolved" clause(s) as well as carry the author's name(s). The **title** should convey the general idea of the topic of the resolution. The "**whereas**" **clause(s)** should explain the rationale for the resolution – identify a problem or need for action; address its timeliness or urgency; recognize its effect on special constituencies, MAFP and/or AAFP, and/or the public at-large; and indicate whether the proposed policy or action will alter current MAFP and/or AAFP policy. The "**resolved**" **clause(s)** are the only portion(s) of the resolution which are subject to adoption. Whatever policy or action is called for must be in the "resolved" portion. These should be clear and concise and positively state the action or policy called for by the resolution.

### WRITING A RESOLUTION

#### *The Title*

Once you have a general idea of the topic of the resolution, create a concise and clear title. The purpose of your resolution should be obvious from the title.

#### *The "Resolved" Clause(s)*

Remember these tips when writing the "resolved" clause(s):

- The "resolved" portion(s) **must be** written to "*stand alone*." This means that you should be able to read these statements separately and have them make sense. There should be no pronouns used (e.g., it, they, we, etc.) that refer to other resolved statements or the "whereas" clause(s). Each "resolved" clause should be perfectly clear without the rest of the document present.
- The action called for must be action *within the purview and resources of the MAFP or AAFP*.
- Call for *only one* action in each "resolved" clause. If there are two or three related actions being proposed, write a separate "resolved" clause for each. If multiple "resolved" clauses are included in a resolution, each "resolved" clause should be related to the central subject of the resolution.
- If an expenditure of MAFP funds is necessary to implement the "resolved" clause(s), a fiscal note must be included with the resolution.

#### *The "Whereas" Clause(s)*

Once the "resolved" clause(s) are written, prepare the "whereas" clause(s). The "whereas" clauses should be clearly and factually stated and be limited to relevant information otherwise they may produce unnecessary debate and, therefore, detract from the effectiveness of the resolution. Though they precede the "resolved" portion in presentation, it is best to develop them *after* the "resolved" portion is written. This makes it easier to limit the "whereas" clause(s) to only the most relevant and necessary information.

Remember these tips when writing the "whereas" clause(s):

- Limit the number of "whereas" clause(s) to the *minimum* required to provide reasonable support for the "resolved" clause(s).
- Carefully check the facts and verify the data used.
- Limit the use of adjectives or qualifying adverbs, which are considered "editorial opinion."

## EXAMPLES

The following are examples of well-stated resolutions, causing little debate and adopted as written.

### *Example 1*

WHEREAS, The Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Food Program (WIC) was initiated to provide better nutrition and nutritional counseling to pregnant women, lactating mothers, and their infants and children up to five years of age, and

*Brief background on underlying issue to be addressed*

WHEREAS, studies at the Harvard School of Public Health have determined that the program is effective in decreasing the number of premature births and low birth weight infants (American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 40:579, 1984; JADA 80:221, 1982), and

*Statistics on its effectiveness*

WHEREAS, nine million women, infants and children are estimated to be eligible for the WIC program but currently only one-third of these are being served, and

*Demonstrates need for funding*

WHEREAS, the AAFP supports cost effective, preventive health measures and adequate nutrition for all children, now, therefore, be it

*Meets an Academy objective*

RESOLVED, That the AAFP actively encourage the United States Congress to support increased funding for WIC to enable higher participation in the program.

*Stands well alone; calls for action within Academy purview*

### *Example 2*

WHEREAS, A great number of physicians practicing in the United States are of Hispanic origin, and

*Concise, clearly stated*

WHEREAS, there is a vast interest among Latin American physicians for continuing educational material in family practice, now, therefore, be it

*Good preface to the resolved clause*

RESOLVED, That the AAFP study the economic and educational viability of translating into Spanish the Home Study Self-Assessment Course and any other pertinent material of educational value.

*Calls for study of its viability. More suitable than a directive to action without study.*