

RESOLUTION

Subject: Promotion of Vaccine Education and the Elimination of the Non-Medical Exemption

Submitted by: Greater Louisville Medical Society

Referred to: Reference Committee

WHEREAS, vaccination has made an enormous contribution to global health leading to the eradication of smallpox and rinderpest, and the near eradication of polio and significantly decreased the morbidity and mortality caused by many previously common childhood illnesses; and

WHEREAS, anti-vaccination efforts are as old as vaccination itself and are not likely to disappear; and

WHEREAS, recent increases in non-vaccinated children has led to major outbreaks of measles and chicken pox resulting in deaths in several states; and

WHEREAS, a minority of parents hold strong anti-vaccination sentiment, the proportion of parents categorized as vaccine-hesitant is increasing and anti-vaccination groups increasingly encourage parents to request vaccine exemptions of religious grounds; and

WHEREAS, the Commonwealth of Kentucky allows for vaccine exemptions if, in the written opinion of the attending physician, such vaccine would be injurious to the patient's health, or if a parent of a child objects by a written sworn statement to the immunization of the child on religious grounds; and

WHEREAS, many physicians may not know what the world's major religions teach about vaccines and immunizations; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Kentucky Medical Association (KMA) believes that nonmedical (religious, philosophical, or personal belief) exemptions from immunizations endanger the health of the unvaccinated individual and the health of those in his or her group and the community at large; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the KMA (1) supports the immunization recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) for all individuals without medical contraindications; (2) supports legislation eliminating nonmedical exemptions; (3) supports public education efforts to address vaccine hesitancy and refusal; (4) educates its member physicians as to what the world's major religions teach about vaccines and immunization practices.