

RESOLUTION

Subject: Improve Access to Grocery Stores and Healthy Foods

Submitted by: Monalisa Tailor, MD

Referred to: Reference Committee

WHEREAS, access to affordable, nutritious food is a fundamental determinant of health and is essential for the prevention and management of chronic diseases; and

WHEREAS, “food deserts” are defined as geographic areas with limited access to affordable and nutritious foods, including fresh fruits, vegetables, and whole grains, often due to a lack of nearby grocery stores; and

WHEREAS, food deserts disproportionately affect low-income, rural, and historically marginalized communities, contributing to health disparities and inequities in diet-related conditions such as obesity, diabetes, and cardiovascular disease; and

WHEREAS, limited access to grocery stores and healthy food options is associated with poorer diet quality and increased risk of chronic disease; and

WHEREAS, improving access to grocery stores, farmers’ markets, and other healthy food sources has been associated with improved dietary behaviors and community health outcomes; and

WHEREAS, barriers to healthy food access include transportation limitations, economic constraints, neighborhood infrastructure, and historical patterns of disinvestment; and

WHEREAS, evidence-based policy approaches—including financial incentives for grocery store development, support for local food systems, and integration of food access into healthcare initiatives—can improve availability and affordability of healthy foods in underserved areas; and

WHEREAS, state medical societies play a critical role in addressing social determinants of health and advocating for policies that improve population health and reduce disparities; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that KMA supports policies and initiatives aimed at increasing access to affordable, nutritious foods in underserved and food desert communities; and be it further

RESOLVED, that KMA supports policy measures that incentivize grocery retailers to locate in underserved communities, including grants, tax incentives, and public-private partnerships; and be it further

RESOLVED, that KMA encourages integration of “food as medicine” initiatives, including produce prescription programs and medically tailored nutrition support, into healthcare systems to address food insecurity for patient & community health.