

1 AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES

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4 Resolution:

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6 Introduced by: American College of Preventive Medicine

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8 Subject: Increased death rate and decreased life expectancy in the United
9 States

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11 Referred to:
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14 Whereas, Consistent increases in the life expectancy of the population of a country are
15 expected and considered an indication of effective public health systems & health care
16 and socio-economic well-being; and

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18 Whereas, Life expectancy for the U.S. population decreased by 0.1 year from 2014
19 (78.9 years) to 2015 (78.8 years), including a decrease of 0.2 years (76.5 years to 76.3
20 years) for males and a decrease of 0.1 years (81.3 years to 81.2 years) for females¹;
21 and

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23 Whereas, U.S. life expectancy is now lower than in most high-income countries and this
24 gap is projected to increase^{2,3}; and

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26 Whereas, Continuous decline in the age-adjusted death rate for the total population of a
27 country is expected and considered a sign of public health progress, good health care,
28 and socio-economic well-being; and

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30 Whereas, From 2014 to 2015, the age-adjusted death rate for the total population rose
31 significantly for the first time since 1999, increasing by 1.2%, with age-adjusted death
32 rate increases for non-Hispanic white males, non-Hispanic white females, and non-
33 Hispanic black males¹; and

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35 Whereas, Between 1999 and 2014, premature mortality increased in white individuals
36 and in American Indians and Alaska Natives, and given that the magnitude of annual
37 mortality increases in the USA is extremely unusual in high-income countries, a rapid
38 public health response is needed to avert further premature deaths⁴; therefore be it

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40 RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association raise awareness of the recent
41 reversals in the improvement of overall death rates and life expectancy with the
42 message that these new problems in the United States are different from all other
43 developed countries and that these trends need to be reversed promptly. (Directive to
44 Take Action); and be it further
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46 RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association call on the legislative and
47 executive branches of the Federal Government to fund and carry out investigations into
48 the causes of these very unusual decreases in life expectancy and increases in death
49 rates in order to design multi-disciplinary interventions to reverse these troubling
50 changes. (Directive to Take Action); and be it further

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52 RESOLVED, That our AMA encourage state and local medical societies to raise
53 awareness of the new problems of decreasing life expectancy and increasing population
54 death rates as indicators of major public health problems and advocate for local
55 investigation of the causes and remedies for these disturbing problems. (New HOD
56 Policy)

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References

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3. Dowell D, Arias E, Kochanek K, Anderson R, Guy GP, Losby JL, Baldwin G. Contribution of opioid-involved poisoning to the change in life expectancy in the United States, 2000-2015. *JAMA*. 2017;318(11):1065-1067. doi:10.1001/jama.2017.9308
4. Shiels MS, Chernyavskiy P, Anderson WF, Best AF, Haozous EA, et al. Trends in premature mortality in the USA by sex, race, and ethnicity from 1999 to 2014: an analysis of death certificate data. *Lancet*. 2017 Mar 11;389(10073):1043-1054. doi: 10.1016/S0140-6736(17)30187-3.

Fiscal Note: