

Report of Reference Committee on PUBLIC HEALTH AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH  
(A-64)

Presented by: Charles C. Smeltzer, M.D., Chairman

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Mr. Speaker and members of the House of Delegates:

Your reference committee on Public Health and Occupational Health has received Supplementary Report K designated "Tobacco and Health" from the Board of Trustees and Resolution 25 from the Wisconsin Delegation, Resolution 33 from the Vermont Delegation, Resolution 35 from the Florida Delegation, Resolution 43 from the Texas Delegation, Resolution 46 from the Illinois Delegation, Resolution 52 from the New Jersey Delegation, Resolution 61 from the Washington Delegation, Resolution 62 from the Colorado Delegation, Resolution 65 from the Oregon Delegation and Resolution 66 from the California Delegation. Because all of these dealt with essentially the same subject, they were considered individually and collectively. Testimony was presented by many individuals and organizations. Your reference committee therefore offers for your consideration a substitute statement which encompasses the best points of each of the above-mentioned documents. Your committee believes that acceptance of this substitute prepared by your reference committee makes it unnecessary to take separate action upon each of the above-mentioned supplementary report and resolutions. Your reference committee therefore recommends:

1. Having reviewed the actions of the House of Delegates of the American Medical Association, available printed information, and very excellent testimony before the reference committee, it became evident to your committee that the American Medical Association is on record and does recognize a significant relationship between cigarette smoking and the incidence of lung cancer and certain other diseases, and that cigarette smoking is a serious health hazard.
2. The AMA recognizes the contribution of the Surgeon General's Committee in its comprehensive report. In keeping with one of the recommendations of this report, the American Medical Association and the National Education Association, through their Joint Committee on Health Problems in Education, have adopted a resolution urging elementary and secondary schools to include programs on smoking and health in their health education curricula. Your reference committee commends this action, recommends its continuation, and in addition, urges the AMA to keep the constituent and component medical associations and their individual members advised as to how they might best utilize this information. In addition, we recommend that programs be developed to disseminate this vital health education material on the hazards of smoking to all age groups through all available means of communication.

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3. Included in the material available to your committee was an AMA pamphlet entitled "Smoking: Facts You Should Know" prepared for public distribution. Your reference committee critically reviewed the initial edition of this pamphlet and believes that, in the light of accumulating knowledge, the pamphlet is in need of modification in its revision.
4. The American Medical Association House of Delegates, in a policy statement of June 1963, recognized the deleterious effects of tobacco on human health and indicated that extensive research is necessary to clarify its exact relationship to health. Because of this, your reference committee believes that the AMA House of Delegates and the Board of Trustees should take great pride in the establishment of the research program that is being carried out by the American Medical Association Education and Research Foundation under the direction of a committee of five scientists, three of whom were members of the Surgeon General's Committee.

Mr. Speaker, in the opinion of your reference committee, the above statement constitutes a concise and accurate statement of policy by the AMA with reference to tobacco as a health hazard.

6. Report of the American Medical Association Education and Research Foundation

We are certain that the members of the House of Delegates will be pleased to receive this report which will clarify many of the problems that have been presented to them as a result of certain newspaper publicity concerning the Research Project on Tobacco and Health of the AMA-ERF.

Your reference committee would like to call to the attention of the House of Delegates the following statement which appears on page 2 of the report of the AMA-ERF: "The Board of Directors of AMA-ERF and the Board of Trustees of the AMA were clearly aware of the possibility of criticism in accepting this grant. But against that possibility they weighed the potential benefits to the public who will continue to smoke and concluded that the risk was insignificant by comparison. The only hope of minimizing the hazards of smoking lies in research which points to the course that the AMA as well as others must take."

Mr. Speaker, I move that the report of the AMA-ERF be accepted for information.

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