REFERENCE COMMITTEE C

Items referred to Reference Committee C will be taken in the following order:

1) AMENDMENT TO CURRENT MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION (MOC) LAW  
   (Resolution: 301C.17; Resolve 1)

2) CERTIFICATE OF NEED (CON) (Resolution: 302C.17; Resolve 1)

3) COMMUNICATION AND RESOLUTION PROGRAM (Resolution: 303C.17; Resolves 1, 2 and 3)

4) INTERSTATE MEDICAL LICENSURE COMPACT (Resolution: 304C.17; Resolve 1)

5) RECOGNITION OF THE NATIONAL BOARD OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS (NBPAS)  
   (Resolution: 305C.17; Resolve 1)

6) STATEWIDE DRONE SYSTEM (Resolution: 306C.17; Resolve 1)

7) LICENSING OF SURGICAL ASSISTANTS (Resolution: 307C.17; Resolve 1)

8) ORGANIZATION OF MAG COUNCIL ON LEGISLATION (Resolution: 308C.17; Resolves 1 and 2)

9) SECOND DOSE MENINGITIS VACCINE (Resolution: 309C.17; Resolve 1)
Mr. Speaker and members of the House of Delegates:

Reference Committee C gave careful consideration to the several items referred to it and submits the following report:

1) AMENDMENT TO CURRENT MAINTENANCE OF CERTIFICATION (MOC) LAW
   (Resolution: 301C.17)

   Original Resolve(s)

   1) “That the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) advocate for an amendment to the current Maintenance of Certification (MOC) law to change verbiage from ‘employment in state medical facilities’ back to the original ‘for hospital staff membership,’ thereby covering all physicians in Georgia.”

   Recommendation:

   Mr. Speaker, your Committee recommends that Resolution 301C.17 be NOT adopted.

   Rationale:

   Your Reference Committee heard testimony that Maintenance of Certification (MOC) is currently a burdensome process that costs physicians substantial time and money. The Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) helped to pass a MOC law in 2017 and the likelihood of passing an amendment to that law in 2018 is very small. MAG is currently involved in a national discussion with a coalition of state and specialty societies with the American Board of Medical Specialties to make the MOC process less burdensome. We believe that there is a significant chance that this diplomatic process can result in the necessary changes. If this process does not result in the needed changes, this resolution should be revisited at the 2018 MAG House of Delegates.

2) CERTIFICATE OF NEED (CON) (Resolution: 302C.17)

   Original Resolve(s)

   1) “That the official policy and position of the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) is and shall be to remain neutral on issues regarding Certificate of Need.”

   Recommendation:

   Mr. Speaker, your Committee recommends that Resolution 302C.17 be referred to the Board of Directors for report at the 2018 MAG House of Delegates.
Rationale:

Your Reference Committee realizes that the topic of Certificate of Need (CON) in Georgia is has, and remains, a very controversial issue among the membership of MAG. CON has significant implications to physicians in Georgia that vary based on specialty, practice environments, employment models, etc. Furthermore, the ever changing state of health care delivery models with the introduction of value based reimbursement and Accountable Care Organizations - whose goals are to reduce health care expenditures - further complicates the issue of CON’s impact on the physicians of GA. The testimony heard in committee reflected these concerns and, due to the complexities of MAG’s official position on CON, was strongly in favor of referral to the Board. One of MAG’s greatest strengths is the relationships formed within the association amongst its members. As such, your Reference Committee felt that a careful study of the issue by the Board of Directors is warranted to determine the implication of any MAG policy related to CON. During this period of study by the Board, your Reference Committee feels that MAG leadership will need to be prepared to respond to inquiries regarding current stance of MAG on CON that can protect its membership. Your Reference Committee believes this could be accomplished by explaining that the policy is under review.

3) COMMUNICATION AND RESOLUTION PROGRAM (Resolution: 303C.17)

Original Resolve(s)

1) “That the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) develops policy in support of the Communication and Resolution Program (CRP) as a viable option to settle disputes within hospital settings, prior to litigation.”

2) “That MAG develops policy in support of federal funding for states to establish and implement effective alternative reforms, such as CRP.”

3) “That the Georgia Delegation submits a resolution to the American Medical Association (AMA) to amend its policy to include CRP as a viable option to settle disputes within hospital settings, prior to litigation.”

Recommendation:

Mr. Speaker, your Committee recommends that Resolves 1 and 2 of Resolution 303C.17 be adopted.

Mr. Speaker, your Committee recommends that Resolve 3 of Resolution 303C.17 be adopted as amended:

3) “That the Georgia Delegation submits a resolution to the American Medical Association (AMA) to amend its policy to include further research CRP as a viable option to settle disputes within hospital settings, prior to litigation.”

Rationale:

Your Reference Committee heard testimony that Communication and Resolution Programs are voluntary and can serve as alternatives to more costly litigation, as evidenced by a recent study presented to the Reference Committee. This study demonstrated that CRP decreased malpractice claims by 50 percent while showing that two-thirds of cases had no identifiable medical error. Additionally, this study suggested that more than 40 percent of patients elected to avoid filing litigation over a bad outcome or medical error in favor of obtaining an explanation, apology, and
assurance that changes would be made to minimize chances that errors would not happen to anyone else. However, more research and funding are needed to explore the viability of these programs.

4) INTERSTATE MEDICAL LICENSURE COMPACT (Resolution: 304C.17)

Original Resolve(s)

1) “That the Medical Association of Georgia develops policy that supports legislation calling for Georgia to become a member of the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact.”

Recommendation:

Mr. Speaker, your Committee recommends that Resolution 304C.17 be adopted.

Rationale:

Your Reference Committee heard testimony that the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact offers an expedited pathway to licensure for qualified physicians who wish to practice in multiple states. Testimony indicated that through the compact, physicians can apply for multiple state medical licenses in a more streamlined process with the understanding that the applicant must still meet each state’s licensure requirements.

5) RECOGNITION OF THE NATIONAL BOARD OF PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS (NBPAS) (Resolution: 305C.17)

Original Resolve(s)

1) “That the Medical Association of Georgia advocates to have the NBPAS Board Certification in Georgia officially recognized to allow physicians the ability to continue as board certified after the original certification ‘expires’ to continue practicing medicine without having to participate in the Maintenance of Certification process.”

Recommendation:

Mr. Speaker, your Committee recommends that Resolution 305C.17 be NOT adopted.

Rationale:

Your Reference Committee heard testimony that Maintenance of Certification (MOC) as a process is unduly burdensome. However, MAG currently has policy recognizing NBPAS as an alternative to American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) for recertification of physicians in Georgia. Additionally, the proposed resolution would not change hospital and third party payer requirements for MOC. MAG’s work with the coalition of specialty and state societies at the national level will hopefully lead to a solution that removes the need for this resolution.

6) STATEWIDE DRONE SYSTEM (Resolution: 306C.17)

Original Resolve(s)

1) “That the Medical Association of Georgia will work to have introduced into the Georgia General Assembly a resolution requesting the state to investigate the feasibility and cost of implementing
a drone network to bring vital blood and blood product supplies and other vital medical supplies
to Georgia trauma sites and hospitals that are in need of said supplies.”

Recommendation:

Mr. Speaker, your Committee recommends that Resolution 306C.17 be adopted as amended:

1) “That the Medical Association of Georgia will work to have introduced into the Georgia General
   Assembly a resolution requesting the state to investigate the feasibility and cost of implementing
   a drone network to bring vital blood and blood product supplies and other vital medical supplies
   to Georgia trauma sites of emergencies and hospitals that are in need of said supplies.”

Rationale:

Your Reference Committee heard testimony that a Georgia senator has proposed to introduce a
resolution to study the feasibility of a drone system in Georgia to overcome many of the difficulties in
getting these lifesaving blood and blood product supplies and other vital medical supplies to sites
where they are needed. The original language created confusion about the meaning of “trauma sites”
so the language was amended. Your Reference Committee supports studying the feasibility of this
network but recommends that this study be conducted and funded solely by the state legislature.

7) LICENSING OF SURGICAL ASSISTANTS (Resolution: 307C.17)

Original Resolve(s)

1) “That Chapter 34 of Title 43 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to physicians,
   acupuncture, physician’s assistants, and others is amended by adding a new article to read as
   follows:

   The Georgia Composite Medical Board establish education, examination, and continuing
   education requirements for license Surgical Assistants.

   The applicant be a graduate of a program approved by the Commission on Accreditation of
   Allied Health Education Programs (CAAHEP), graduate from a U.S. military program that
   emphasizes surgical assisting, or a nationally certified surgical assistant from the Association of
   Surgical Assistants (ASA), the National Surgical Assistant Association (NSAA), or the
   American Board of Surgical Assistants (ABSA) with currency.’ ”

Recommendation:

Mr. Speaker, your Committee recommends that Resolution 307C.17 be referred to the Board of Directors
for decision.

Rationale:

Your Reference Committee heard conflicting testimony about the problem to be solved by creating a
licensure system in Georgia for surgical assistants. Some members’ testimony advocated that the lack
of a licensure system creates patient safety issues, but others testified that the issue had not been fully
defined. Additionally, even though the purported intent of the resolution was not to make it
mandatory, it was not clear under the language of the resolution. Your Reference Committee supports
licensure of surgical assistants as a concept; however, the issue needs to be fully vetted and discussed prior to garnering the support of MAG.

8) ORGANIZATION OF MAG COUNCIL ON LEGISLATION (Resolution: 308C.17)

Original Resolve(s)

1) “That MAG’s Council on Legislation be comprised of both county and specialty societies.”

2) “That MAG’s Council on Legislation include current legislative priorities from the current House of Delegates.”

Recommendation:

Mr. Speaker, your Committee recommends that Resolution 308C.17 be not adopted.

Rationale:

Your Reference Committee heard testimony about the current composition of the council, especially the opportunity to join the COL as an at-large member. Because the opportunity already exists and because adding more members would lead to an unmanageably large COL that could delay progress on issues before the council, your Reference Committee believes that adding more members is imprudent. Even if they do not have a voting seat, a member of any county medical society could listen in on the meetings of the COL. Testimony was provided that the actions and discussions of the COL are intended to be transparent to all MAG members through the above mechanisms.

Your Reference Committee also heard testimony discussing the process by which legislative priorities are set. Testimony suggested that setting legislative priorities based upon the current House of Delegates could cause undue delay that would harm the prospects of successfully advancing MAG’s agenda. Additionally, MAG has the opportunity to look at actions from HOD and, where necessary, has the flexibility to take on those issues during the legislative session.

9) SECOND DOSE MENINGITIS VACCINE (Resolution: 309C.17)

Original Resolve(s)

1) “That the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) supports the requirement of a second dose of the meningococcal conjugate vaccine for 12th graders in accordance with CDC recommendations.”

Recommendation:

Mr. Speaker, your Committee recommends that Resolution 309C.17 be adopted as amended:

1) “That the Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) supports the requirement of a second dose of the meningococcal conjugate vaccine for 12th graders in accordance with CDC recommendations. CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices’ evidence based meningococcal vaccination recommendations for children, adolescents, and adults.”
Rationale:

Your Reference Committee heard testimony that the CDC recently updated its guidelines for the meningococcal vaccine schedule, so an amendment reflecting those changes was suggested and supported by the committee. Testimony supported the protection of children, adolescents, and adults against meningitis. Your Reference Committee believes it is important that MAG’s policy remain in agreement with current CDC vaccination guidelines.

Mr. Speaker, this concludes the report of Reference Committee C. I wish to thank the members of the committee who are:

Charles Inman Wilmer, M.D., Vice Chairman, MAA
Fonda Ann Mitchell, M.D., MAA
Fred Lester Daniel, M.D., Georgia MS
Michael H. Callahan, M.D., Hall CMS
Darl Wayne Rantz, M.D., Bibb CMS

Mr. Speaker, your Reference Committee wishes to also thank MAG staff members, Derek Norton and Bethany Sherrer, for their very capable assistance to the committee.

Karl Daniel Schultz Jr., M.D., Chairman
Hall CMS