



RESOLUTION WRITING GUIDELINES*

CONTENT

Every resolution must have a title, “whereas” clause(s), and “resolved” clause(s), and must carry the author’s name(s).

The title should convey the general idea of the topic of the resolution.

The “**whereas**” clause(s) should explain the rationale for the resolution. Taken together, whereas clauses should identify a problem or need for action; address its timeliness or urgency; recognize its effect on members at large, patients, or special constituencies, OAFP and/or AAFP, and/or the public at large; and indicate whether the proposed policy or action will alter current MAFP and/or AAFP policy. The “**resolved**” clause(s) are the only portion(s) of the resolution which are subject to adoption. Whatever policy or action is called for must be in the “resolved” portion. These should be clear and concise and positively state the action or policy called for by the resolution.

WRITING A RESOLUTION

The Title

Once you have a general idea of the topic of the resolution, create a concise and clear title. The purpose of your resolution should be obvious from the title.

The “Resolved” Clause(s)

Remember these tips when writing the “resolved” clause(s):

- The “resolved” portion(s) **must be** written to “*stand alone*.” This means that you should be able to read these statements separately and have them make sense. There should be no pronouns used (e.g., it, they, we, etc.) that refer to other resolved statements or the “whereas” clause(s). Each “resolved” clause should be perfectly clear without the rest of the document present.
- The action called for must be action *within the purview and resources of the OAFP or AAFP*.
- Call for *only* one action in each “resolved” clause. If there are two or three actions being proposed, write a separate “resolved” clause for each one. If multiple “resolved” clauses are included in a resolution, each “resolved” clause should be related to the central subject of the resolution.
- If an expenditure of OAFP funds is necessary to implement the “resolved” clauses, a fiscal note must be included with the resolution.

* Adapted from Michigan Academy of Family Physicians, and American Academy of Family Physicians

The “Whereas” Clause(s)

Once the "resolved" clause(s) are written, prepare the "whereas" clause(s). The "whereas" clauses should be clearly and factually stated and be limited to relevant information otherwise they may produce unnecessary debate and, therefore, detract from the effectiveness of the resolution. Though they precede the "resolved" portion in presentation, it is best to develop them after the "resolved" portion is written. This makes it easier to limit the "whereas" clause(s) to only the most relevant and necessary information.

Remember these tips when writing the “whereas” clause(s):

- Limit the number of "whereas" clause(s) to *minimum* required to provide reasonable support for the "resolved" clause(s).
- Carefully check the facts and verify the data used.
- Limit the use of adjectives or qualifying adverbs, which are considered “editorial opinion.”

EXAMPLES

The following are examples of well-stated resolutions, causing little debate and adopted as written.

Example 1

WHEREAS, The Women, Infants and Children Supplemental Food Program (WIC) was initiated to provide better nutrition and nutritional counseling to pregnant women, lactating mothers, and their infants and children up to five years of age, and

Brief background on underlying issue to be addressed

WHEREAS, studies at the Harvard School of Public Health have determined that the program is effective in decreasing the number of premature births and low birth weight infants ([American Journal of Clinical Nutrition, 40:579, 1984; JADA 80:221, 1982](#)), and

Statistics on its effectiveness

WHEREAS, nine million women, infants and children are estimated to be eligible for the WIC program but currently only one-third of these are being served, and

Demonstrates need for funding

WHEREAS, the AAFP supports cost effective, preventive health measures and adequate nutrition for all children, now, therefore, be it

Meets an Academy objective

RESOLVED, That the AAFP actively encourage the United States Congress to support increased funding for WIC to enable higher participation in the program.

Stands well alone; calls for action within Academy purview

Example 2

WHEREAS, A great number of physicians practicing in the United States are of Hispanic origin, and

Concise, clearly stated

WHEREAS, there is a vast interest among Latin American physicians for continuing educational material in family practice, now, therefore, be it

Good preface to the resolved clause

RESOLVED, That the AAFP study the economic and educational viability of translating into Spanish the Home Study Self-Assessment Course and any other pertinent material of educational value.

Calls for study of its viability. More suitable than a directive to action without study.