WHEREAS, The United States government has detained undocumented migrant children in detention centers and the number of migrant children is now greater than 12,000 - more than ever before and a fivefold increase since last year; and

WHEREAS, The Flores Settlement of 1997 requires the United States Government to release undocumented children “without unnecessary delay” when detention is not required for the protection or safety of that child; and those children that remain in custody must be placed in the “least restrictive setting” possible; and

WHEREAS, It has been established that these detention centers can be detrimental to the health of children and their subsequent development; and

WHEREAS, These detention centers have a documented record of medical, psychological and sexual abuse of some of these children; and

WHEREAS, Physician whistleblowers have reported their “horror” at the conditions and treatment of these children; and

WHEREAS, The Trump administration has already missed deadlines for the release of many children and has now proposed overturning the Flores Agreement to allow the indefinite detention of children with their families, and most recently, has moved many children during the night out of detention centers to a tent city in Texas, with even less support and more concerns regarding their welfare and prospects; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association oppose the separation of migrant children from their families and any effort to end or weaken the Flores Settlement that requires the United States Government to release undocumented children “without unnecessary delay” when detention is not required for the protection or safety of that child and that those children that remain in custody must be placed in the “least restrictive setting” possible, such as emergency foster care (New HOD Policy); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA support the humane treatment of all undocumented children, whether with families or not, by advocating for regular, unannounced, auditing of the medical conditions and services provided at all detention facilities by a non-governmental, third party with medical expertise in the care of vulnerable children (New HOD Policy); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA urge that all children released from such detention be provided with indicated follow-up health care to ensure their welfare following these experiences. (New HOD Policy)
RELEVANT AMA POLICY

Medical Needs of Unaccompanied, Undocumented Immigrant Children D-65.992
1. Our AMA will take immediate action by releasing an official statement that acknowledges that the health of unaccompanied immigrant children without proper documentation is a humanitarian issue.
2. Our AMA urges special consideration of the physical, mental, and psychological health in determination of the legal status of unaccompanied minor children without proper documentation.
3. Our AMA will immediately meet and work with other physician specialty societies to identify the main obstacles to the physical health, mental health, and psychological well-being of unaccompanied children without proper documentation.
4. Our AMA will participate in activities and consider legislation and regulations to address the unmet medical needs of unaccompanied minor children without proper documentation status, with issues to be discussed to include the identification of: (A) the health needs of this unique population, including standard pediatric care as well as mental health needs; (B) health care professionals to address these needs, to potentially include but not be limited to non-governmental organizations, federal, state, and local governments, the US military and National Guard, and local and community health professionals; (C) the resources required to address these needs, including but not limited to monetary resources, medical care facilities and equipment, and pharmaceuticals; and (D) avenues for continuity of care for these children during the potentially extended multi-year legal process to determine their final disposition.
Citation: (Res. 5, I-15)

Ensuring Access to Health Care, Mental Health Care, Legal and Social Services for Unaccompanied Minors and Other Recently Immigrated Children and Youth D-60.968
Our AMA will work with medical societies and all clinicians to (i) work together with other child-serving sectors to ensure that new immigrant children receive timely and age-appropriate services that support their health and well-being, and (ii) secure federal, state, and other funding sources to support those services.
Citation: (Res. 8, I-14)