Whereas, The American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) has responded to a groundswell of criticism focused on the requirements for maintenance of certification (MOC) by creating an independent “Vision Commission” designed to “reimagine a system of continuing certification”; and

Whereas, The Vision Commission released its draft report December 11, 2018, with a public comment period that ended January 15, 2019; and

Whereas, The draft report was divided into “Findings” and “Recommendations,” and some of the highlights include results of a survey conducted by the Vision Commission which showed that only 12% of 34,616 physicians surveyed valued the program; and

Whereas, Robust evidence does not exist correlating physicians’ grades on secure, pass/fail MOC exams with patient outcomes; and

Whereas, Secure exam questions and assessments that rely exclusively on knowledge recall are not aligned with how diplomates practice and provide patient care; and

Whereas, The Vision Commission has documented significant harmful consequences of MOC, stating “The Commission heard compelling testimony from all stakeholders that loss of certification can lead to loss of employment or certain employment opportunities for diplomates or loss of reimbursement from insurance carriers”; and

Whereas, One of the promises in the Hippocratic Oath we take as physicians is “First, do no Harm” or “primum non nocere”; therefore be it

RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association urge all American Board of Medical Specialties (ABMS) Boards to phase out the use of mandated, periodic, pass/fail, point-in-time examinations, and Quality Improvement/Practice Improvement components of the Maintenance of Certification process, and replace them with more longitudinal and formative assessment strategies that provide feedback for continuous learning and improvement and support a physician’s commitment to ongoing professional development (Directive to Take Action); and be it further
RESOLVED, That our AMA encourage all ABMS Boards to adopt and immediately begin the
process of implementing the following recommendation from the Continuing Board Certification
Vision For the Future Commission Final Report: “Continuing certification must change to
incorporate longitudinal and other innovative formative assessment strategies that support
learning, identify knowledge and skills gaps, and help diplomates stay current. The ABMS
Boards must offer an alternative to burdensome highly-secure, point-in-time examinations of
knowledge.” (Directive to Take Action)

Fiscal Note: Not yet determined

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