

## DISCLAIMER

The following is a preliminary report of actions taken by the House of Delegates at its 2003 Annual Meeting and should not be considered final. Only the Official Proceedings of the House of Delegates reflect official policy of the Association.

AMERICAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION HOUSE OF DELEGATES (A-03)

Report of Reference Committee D

Carol A. Tavani, MD, Chair

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1 (24) RESOLUTION 423 – TOXICITY OF COMPUTERS AND ELECTRONICS WASTE

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RECOMMENDATION A:

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Mr. Speaker, your Reference Committee recommends that the first resolve of Resolution 423 be amended by insertion on page 1, line 36 to read as follows:

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RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association encourage its members and US health institutions to adopt purchasing or leasing contracts only with electronics manufacturers and distributors who are committed to safely handling the products at the end of life, meaning that they reuse and recycle to the greatest extent possible, do not export hazardous electronic waste to developing countries and safely dispose of the waste that can not be reused or recycled (**New HOD Policy**); and be it further

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RECOMMENDATION B:

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Mr. Speaker, your Reference Committee recommends that the third resolve of Resolution 423 be amended by insertion on page 2, line 7 to read as follows:

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RESOLVED, That our AMA support policies that hold electronics manufacturers and distributors responsible for taking back their products at the end of life, with the objective of redesigning their products for longevity and reduction of harmful materials. (**New HOD Policy**)

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RECOMMENDATION C:

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Mr. Speaker, your Reference Committee recommends that Resolution 423 be adopted as amended.

**HOD ACTION: Resolution 423 adopted as amended.**

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2 Resolution 423 asks our AMA to encourage its members and US health institutions to (1)  
3 adopt purchasing/leasing contracts only with electronics manufacturers who are committed  
4 to safely handling the products at the end of life (meaning that they reuse and recycle to  
5 the greatest extent possible, do not export hazardous electronics waste to developing  
6 countries, and safely dispose of the waste that can not be reused or recycled); (2) provide  
7 purchasing/leasing preferences to electronics manufacturers who minimize the use of toxic  
8 and hazardous constituents and use recycled content and design products that can be  
9 recycled easily to minimize adverse public health impacts from electronics waste; and (3)  
10 support policies holding electronics manufacturers responsible for taking back their  
11 products at the end of life, with the objective of redesigning products for longevity and  
12 reduction of harmful materials.

13 Testimony focused on the leadership role that organized medicine can play with respect to  
14 the increasingly problematic disposal of electronics waste. The speed with which electronic  
15 devices can become obsolete is seemingly increasing, and the improper disposal of these  
16 devices poses a public health threat as heavy metals and other harmful materials enter the  
17 environment. One speaker noted that oftentimes the distributor of these devices simply  
18 assembles products from a number of different companies, suggesting that both  
19 manufacturers and distributors may have a role to play in reducing this waste stream. For  
20 that reason, your Reference Committee has suggested amendments to the first and third  
21 resolves.