

SUBJECT: Health Literacy

SUBMITTED BY: Columbus (VI) Osteopathic Association

REFERRED TO:

1 WHEREAS, an estimated 21 million Americans simply cannot read; and

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3 WHEREAS, reading abilities are typically three to five grade levels below the last year of
4 school completed and more than 10 million Americans have graduated from high school
5 reading at a 7th or 8th grade level, and one in five high school graduates cannot read their
6 diplomas; and

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8 WHEREAS, the US Department of Health and Human Services report *Healthy People*
9 *2010* states health literacy is the capacity to obtain, process, and understand basic health
10 information and services to make appropriate health decisions; and

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12 WHEREAS, more than one-half of all Americans have health literacy issues; and

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14 WHEREAS, two-thirds of US adults age 60 and over have inadequate or marginal
15 literacy skills; and

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17 WHEREAS, 81 percent of patients age 60 and older cannot read or understand basic
18 materials such as prescription labels and 85 percent of unwed mothers are illiterate; and

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20 WHEREAS, approximately half of all Medicare/Medicaid recipients read below the fifth-
21 grade level; now, therefore, be it

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23 RESOLVED, that the Ohio Osteopathic Association strongly support the campaign
24 against health illiteracy; and, be it further

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26 RESOLVED, that the OOA strongly encourage all practitioners and medical facilities to
27 create a shame-free environment where low-literate patients can seek help without feeling
28 stigmatized; and, be it further

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30 RESOLVED, that this resolution be forwarded to the American Osteopathic
31 Association's House of Delegates for consideration at its 2011 annual meeting.

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34 *Note: Statistics from Center for Health Care Strategies (www.chcs.org) and Healthy*
35 *People 2010*