RESOLUTION NO. 7

WHEREAS, doctors of osteopathic and allopathic medicine are both required to complete 4 years of medical school, and 3-7 years of residency; and

WHEREAS, there are over 70,000 osteopathic physicians who are licensed to practice medicine in all 50 states, of which over 63,000 are in active practice; and

WHEREAS, as of 2011, 1 in 5 medical students in the United States were osteopathic students; and

WHEREAS, by 2020, the number of osteopathic physicians is estimated to approach 100,000; and

WHEREAS, currently, there are 29 colleges of osteopathic medicine with 37 locations throughout the United States; and

WHEREAS, 36 states currently have legislation restricting discrimination against an osteopathic or allopathic physician for healthcare and licensure purposes; and

WHEREAS, the American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the American Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME) are currently in discussions to unify the accreditation process of allopathic and osteopathic post-graduate training programs; and

WHEREAS, the federal government has no policy supporting the equality of osteopathic and allopathic physicians with respect to employment, staff, privileges, payment for services, or the provision of professional services for a physician licensed to practice; and

WHEREAS, the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) recently issued Proposed Rule 42 CFR Part 438, 441, and 447 which discriminated against osteopathic physicians with AOA Board certification requiring them to attest to different criteria than those with American Board of Medical Specialty certification in order to take advantage of increased Medicare payments, and which will have an influential effect on state Medicaid agencies proposing identical rules in order to comply with the federal rule; and

WHEREAS, the AOA, American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP), and their state affiliate societies spent much time advocating for changes to CMS’s proposed rule at both the national and state levels; and

WHEREAS, the rapid implementation of components of the Affordable Care Act through rules and regulations will make tracking of potential discrimination very difficult for the AOA, ACOFP and their state affiliate societies; now, therefore be it,
RESOLVED, the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians (ACOFP) continues to ensure that legislation and regulatory policy specifies that any reference at the national level in an executive order, an administrative regulation, or in the federal revised statutes to “medical doctor”, “MD”, “physician”, “allopathic physician”, an allopathic medical specialty board, or reference to any medical student, or postgraduate, shall be deemed to include and pertain to a “doctor of osteopathic medicine”, “DO”, AOA specialty board, and osteopathic medical students and postgraduates; and, be it further,

RESOLVED, that the American College of Osteopathic Family Physicians adopts and forwards this resolution to the American Osteopathic Association House of Delegates for consideration.

Explanatory Statement:

The ACOFP applauds the goals that would be achieved by passage of a comprehensive bill regarding this issue. The goal of ensuring appropriate recognition of osteopathic physicians, residents, students, and certification is being continuously achieved by the ACOFP through advocacy, the work of the ACOFP Director of Government Relations, and the ACOFP Committee on Federal and State Legislation.

ACTION: Amended and Approved.

ACTION ____________________

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vi AOA Division of State Government Affairs, May 2012
