Whereas, Our AMA has long advocated for policies that are scientifically sound and that positively influence public health policy; and

Whereas, We in the AMA have an opportunity to influence and promote legislation at both the national and state level on energy savings through a reduction in light pollution; and

Whereas, Light pollution is increasingly recognized as a waste of energy and a public safety issue; and

Whereas, It has been calculated that over 10 billion dollars in wasted energy could be saved with the use of full cutoff streetlights; and

Whereas, Emitted glare light is wasted light and accounts for about 40% of the light emitted by standard streetlights (cobras), it is therefore a significant source of wasted electricity, and this contributes to excess carbon dioxide production and possibly global warming; and

Whereas, Numerous states (Arizona, Arkansas, Connecticut, Delaware, Hawaii, Maine, Michigan, Montana, New Mexico, Rhode Island, Texas, Vermont, Virginia, Wyoming), many municipalities, and several countries have now enacted Light pollution control measures; and

Whereas, Light pollution control legislation is being proposed in Congress; and

Whereas, Streetlight glare causes decreased nighttime visibility by pupil constriction, and thus leads to diminished nighttime visibility and creates a safety hazard; and

Whereas, Many older citizens are significantly affected by glare as the eye ages, leading to unsafe driving conditions; and

Whereas, Glare light is also light trespass and is intrusive and unwanted in households and dwellings; and

Whereas, Light trespass has been implicated in disruption of the human and animal circadian rhythm, and strongly suspected as an etiology of suppressed melatonin production, depressed immune systems, and increase in cancer rates such as breast cancers; and

Whereas, Light trespass disrupts nocturnal animal activity and results in diminished various animal populations’ survival and health; therefore be it
RESOLVED, That our American Medical Association advocate that all future outdoor lighting be
of energy efficient designs to reduce waste of energy and production of greenhouse gasses that
result from this wasted energy use (New HOD Policy); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA support light pollution reduction efforts and glare reduction efforts at
both the national and state levels (New HOD Policy); and be it further

RESOLVED, That our AMA support efforts to ensure all future streetlights be of a fully shielded
design or similar non-glare design to improve the safety of our roadways for all, but especially
vision impaired and older drivers. (New HOD Policy)

Fiscal Note: Staff cost estimated at less than $500 to implement.

Received: 03/30/09

1 US Department of Transportation, Phase II of ENV project, Chapter 3: Discomfort and Disability Glare Study, 2005
23 Gray, Robert. Predicting the effects of Disability Glare on Driving Performance, Proceedings of the forth International driving Symposium on Human Factors in Driver Assessment, Training and vehicle Design.