

Resolution 26-402
FMA to examine the feasibility of Physicians' Unionization in Florida
Polk County Medical Association

1 Whereas, Research published by the American Academy of Emergency Medicine (AAEM) suggests
2 that profit-driven ownership can lead to under-staffing and compromised patient safety; and
3

4 Whereas, Administrative decisions by corporate investors can override a physician's professional
5 judgment, pressuring them to meet financial metrics rather than focusing solely on individualized
6 patient care; and
7

8 Whereas, Common profit-driven strategies include replacing experienced physicians with less
9 costly advanced practice providers (APPs), increasing patient loads per clinician, and driving up
10 patient costs through upcoding or overutilization and ultimately eroding clinical medical care; and
11

12 Whereas, In many corporate contracts, physicians are "at-will" employees, meaning they can be
13 fired without the peer-review protections that traditionally guarded medical judgment; and
14

15 Whereas, The large-scale acquisition of medical practices by corporations has resulted in a
16 significant loss of clinical oversight, potentially eroding the physician's primary ethical commitment
17 to patient well-being and safety; and
18

19 Whereas, Physicians increasingly face the threat of professional retaliation or termination by
20 corporate employers for advocating against unsafe staffing ratios or unsound clinical practices; and
21

22 Whereas, A staggering 91% of physicians identify the erosion of professional autonomy as a
23 primary threat to the integrity of U.S. healthcare; and
24

25 Whereas, Corporate-employed physicians frequently encounter administrative interference in
26 medical decision-making, including restrictive "walled garden" referral patterns (61%) and external
27 constraints on prescribing protocols (45%); and
28

29 Whereas, Union contracts often mandate "just cause" for termination, preventing administrators
30 from firing a physician simply for standing up for safety. This is a critical shield against retaliation
31 that is often missing for non-union or independent physicians; and
32

33 Whereas, When a group of physicians speaks up together as one voice through a union, it shifts the
34 power dynamic, making it harder for management to ignore or isolate individual physicians; and
35

36 Whereas, Unions provide access to legal counsel to fight wrongful disciplinary actions and
37 emotional support from peers, which can be vital for whistleblowers. Unionization provides legal
38 leverage to improve working conditions, combat excessive workloads, and directly influence patient
39 care standards; and
40

41 Whereas, Unions negotiate guaranteed salary increases and ensure that pay reflects the high costs
42 of medical training and student debt; and
43

Whereas, Labor unions have secured significant improvements in retirement, family leave, and niche areas like transportation. These wins often stem from collective bargaining agreements that codify benefits as part of the total compensation package; and

Whereas, Unionized workers have significantly higher access to employer-sponsored retirement plans compared to their non-union peers. Additionally, union employers are statistically more likely to contribute larger amounts toward these plans; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the FMA legal team is directed to examine the feasibility of establishing a Physician Union in Florida for the purpose of collective bargaining, and to obtain advice from attorneys specialized in labor law concerning the potential creation of such a union within the state.

Fiscal Note:

Description	Amount	Budget Narrative
5 Staff hours	\$850	Can be accomplished with current staff
Total	\$850	\$0 added to the operating budget

Fiscal notes are an estimate of the cost to implement a given Resolution. All Resolutions that are adopted by the House of Delegates will be referred to the FMA Committee on Finance and Appropriations for fiscal consideration.

Reference Committee: IV – Medical Economics