RESOLUTION NO. *** (New York State E)

Make Oral Contraceptive Pills Available without Prescription

Introduced by the New York State Chapter

Referred to the Reference Committee on ***

WHEREAS, Unintended pregnancy remains a major public health problem in the United States, and approximately half of those occur in women who report using contraception at the time of conception, and

WHEREAS, access and cost issues are common reasons why women either do not use contraception or have gaps in use, and

WHEREAS, the American Academy of Family Physicians has previously endorsed contraceptive access as an important public health measure, including the resolution “Remove Barriers to Over-the-Counter Contraception for Low Income Women” aimed at urging insurers and Medicaid to cover the range of the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved contraceptive methods and supplies sold over-the-counter (OTC) and not to require a prescription for such coverage, and

WHEREAS, the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists recommends that oral contraceptive pills (OCPs) should be available over-the-counter (2012), and that weighing the risks versus the benefits based on currently available data, women should self-screen for most contraindications to OCPs using checklists, and

WHEREAS, screening for cervical cancer or STIs is not medically required to provide hormonal contraception, and was not significantly decreased by OTC contraceptive use, and

WHEREAS, continuation rates of OCPs are higher in women who are provided with multiple pill packs at one time, and

WHEREAS, many women choose their method of birth control specifically because it does not require a prescription, and current OTC products have much lower efficacy, and

WHEREAS, neither safety nor efficacy concerns about OCPs have been found to justify their prescription status, and

WHEREAS, surveys indicate that most women in the U.S., as well as pharmacists, look favorably upon the prospect of accessing OCPs without a prescription, and

WHEREAS, this recommendation could enhance prospects for a pharmaceutical company approaching the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to make one or more OCP formulations available to women without a prescription, now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians write to the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to urge that oral contraceptive pills (OCPs) be made available without a prescription and with coverage by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services and commercial insurers, and be it further
RESOLVED, That the American Academy of Family Physicians endorse making oral contraceptive pills (OCPs) available without a prescription, with coverage by insurers and the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services.

(Received 07/12/13)