

Statement on Physician Nonparticipation in Legally Authorized Executions

Committee of Origin: Ethics

**(Approved by the ASA House of Delegates on October 18, 2006, and reaffirmed on
October 26, 2016)**

- 1) Execution by lethal injection has resulted in the incorrect association of capital punishment with the practice of medicine, particularly anesthesiology.
- 2) Although lethal injection mimics certain technical aspects of the practice of anesthesia, *capital punishment in any form is not the practice of medicine.*
- 3) Because of ancient and modern principles of medical ethics, legal execution should not necessitate participation by an anesthesiologist or any other physician.
- 4) ASA continues to agree with the position of the American Medical Association on physician involvement in capital punishment. ASA strongly discourages participation by anesthesiologists in executions.