

Drug position change rejected

A resolution passed March 14 by the Drug Research Board to clarify the DRB position on drug anti-substitution laws was rejected three days later by the Executive Committee of the Assembly of Life Sciences of the National Research Council.

Last October, the DRB had passed a resolution that was interpreted, in a press release from the National Research Council, as calling for changes in the laws. The interpretation was disseminated by the American Pharmaceutical Assn., which is seeking repeal of anti-substitution laws. In its March 14 resolution, the DRB said, "In retaining to the physician the responsibility for drug selection, the DRB adopted no position with respect to changes in, or repeal of, drug anti-substitution laws."

IN A MEMO to DRB members, Thomas J. Kennedy, MD, executive director of the Assembly of Life Sciences, said his committee "explicitly rejects the actions which the Drug Research Board took at its meeting of March 14, 1975, to amend its resolution of Oct. 25, 1974, since at least one of these amendments is patently inconsistent with the original position of the DRB. The Executive Committee of the ALS approved this original position several months ago and today reaffirms its concurrence with that original position."

His memo followed a communication from Duke C. Trexler, DRB secretary, asking members to respond by postcard on whether to conduct a mail ballot or recommend other review procedures. Dr. Kennedy's memo contended that the executive committee action "does not necessitate any additional review or action by the DRB; (the DRB) is free to follow any course of action that it deems appropriate."

AMA Board Chairman Richard E. Palmer, MD, and Trustee Jere W. Annis, MD, participated in the March 14 DRB meeting.

This week in JAMA

"Antibiotics and Gram-Negative Bacteremia," by J. T. Curti, MD, of New York, will be the featured special communication in the March 31 issue of the *Journal of the AMA*.