Date: March 28, 2014
To: AAA Executive Board
From: Damon Dozier, Director of Public Affairs, (ddozier@aaanet.org / 703.528.1902, x1163)
Subject: Statements and Resolutions re: AAA Public Policy Actions

This memorandum provides information about AAA public policy statements since the 1990s, and AAA rules and procedures regarding their adoption. Due to the number of statements the Association has issued in the recent past, this document focuses on the Association’s major actions. **To date, the AAA has never announced a boycott of any academic institution or foreign country.**

**ASSOCIATION RULES AND POLICIES**

In 2004, the AAA adopted rules (http://www.aaanet.org/committees/aoc/pub_stmts.htm) entitled “Guidelines for Consideration of Proposed Public Statements, to include Motions from the Annual Business Meeting.” The guidelines include the following:

1. The Board should be strategic in selecting matters on which to speak out (i.e., don’t waste your powder on matters on which the organization has little hope of making an impact).
2. Public statements should address matters of clear common professional interest and concern to the Association's membership or public statements should be issued only on matters about which the Association's members have special knowledge and or expertise.
3. The statement itself should include language that demonstrates such special knowledge. Thus, to the extent possible, the statement should present anthropological findings, conclusions or recommendations on the matter being addressed.
4. Public statements should make a contribution to better public understanding of the matter being addressed.
5. Public statements should specify their intended audience.
6. If the statement seeks action, it should specify upon whom such action is urged and detail the action being sought.

The AAA also has a list of guidelines for selecting locations for its annual and section meetings (http://www.aaanet.org/meetings/loc_policies.cfm):

1. AAA may not meet in any state with sodomy laws.
2. AAA staff responsible for negotiating and administering meeting venue contracts shall "strongly prefer" meeting facilities whose staff are represented by a union.
3. AAA staff responsible for negotiating and administering annual meeting contracts shall show preference to locales with living wage ordinances.
4. AAA values giving preference to accommodation suppliers that have active and ongoing sustainability programs and policies.

**US LOCATIONS SUBJECT TO AAA BOYCOTT**

Several US locations have been identified as off-limits for annual or section meetings until specific, measurable changes have been instituted. These include:

1. Illinois (US) (repealed) – In 1999, the AAA passed a resolution announcing that the Association would not hold scholarly meetings in the state of Illinois until such a time that the University of Illinois replace “Chief Illiniwek” with a mascot that does not promote “inaccurate, anachronistic
and damaging stereotypes of Native American people, or indeed members of any minority
group.” In June 2007, the Executive Board agreed that in recognition of the fact that the
University of Illinois has discontinued its use of Chief Illiniwek as a mascot, AAA will resume
scheduling meetings in Illinois. AAA held an Annual Meeting in Chicago in 2013.

2. Arizona (US) – On May 22, 2010 the AAA Executive Board passed a resolution resolving to not
hold a scholarly conference (applying to its Sections, Committees and Commissions) in the state
of Arizona until such time that Senate Bill 1070 is either repealed or struck down as
constitutionally invalid and thus unenforceable by a court. This Bill SB 1070, would have, among
other things, made the failure to carry certain immigration documents a crime, and given the
police broad power to detain anyone suspected of being in the country illegally, even if they had
committed no other crime. It is worth noting that this ban does not apply to Indian Reservations
in the state. It is also worth noting that some of the most objectionable provisions were later

3. Georgia (US) – Also on May 22, 2010, the AAA Executive Board passed a resolution resolving to
not hold a scholarly conference (applying to its Sections, Committees and Commissions) in the
state of Georgia until such time as HB 87 is either repealed or struck down as constitutionally
invalid. Some of the provisions of the bill included a provision that would make the use of false
information or documentation when applying for a job a felony. Another provision created an
immigration review board to investigate complaints about government officials not complying
with state laws related to illegal immigration, and applicants for public benefits would have to
provide at least one state or federally issued "secure and verifiable" document. A month after
this resolution passed, the Executive Board Ad Hoc Group on Immigration (Hugh Gusterson, Ed
Liebow, Vilma Santiago-Irizarry, Jay Schensul, Alisse Waterston) drafted a General Statement on
Immigration ([http://www.aaanet.org/issues/policy-advocacy/AAA-General-Statement-on-
Immigration.cfm](http://www.aaanet.org/issues/policy-advocacy/AAA-General-Statement-on-
Immigration.cfm)) that declared that the AAA “will continue to monitor closely and avoid
investing in states that sponsor laws that give police broad powers and discretion to single out
members of a specific ethnic group whether in principle or by practice; remove social services
from undocumented immigrants; ban undocumented immigrants from public schools and
colleges, and/or charge discriminatory fees; criminalize those who drive or shelter
undocumented immigrants; and require individual identification cards that indicate immigration
status.” At the time of the drafting of the statement, at least five states (Alabama, Arizona,
Georgia, Indiana, and Utah) had passed anti-immigration legislation, and according to AAA staff
research, legislation was pending in at least 23 other states, though none secured passage

LOCATIONS SUBJECT TO AAA STATEMENTS OF CENSURE OR CONDEMNATION

Several locations have been subject to Association statements of censure or condemnation in an effort
to see measurable changes instituted. These include:

1. Cuba – In January, 1994, AAA passed a resolution condemning the US Cuban embargo and
asking that the US Congress and President Clinton adopt a consistent humanitarian policy of
alleviating human suffering by ending its Cuban embargo, and in particular lifting its ban on the
sale of food and medical supplies and equipment; and adopt a more humane approach to
resolving differences with Cuba by encouraging a freer exchange of ideas and persons, lifting for
example, its restrictions on US citizens' travel to Cuba and Cuban citizens' travel to the US,
including Cuban scholars and students seeking academic degrees, and its ban on the sale of paper desperately needed for educational purposes.

2. Colorado (US) – In January, 1995, AAA passed a resolution calling upon the citizens of Colorado to challenge and repeal State Constitutional Amendment #2, which sought to repeal anti-discrimination ordinances in several Colorado cities, and also called upon Colorado citizens to urge the state legislature to prohibit the passage of any such ordinances in the future.

3. Peru – In June, 2009, the AAA and Organizing Committee of the World Council of Anthropological Associations (WCAA) issued a statement to Peruvian President Alan Garcia expressing concern about the government’s violation of indigenous peoples’ human, territorial and legal rights. The statement also condemned the use of violence against peaceful protestors, as well as the executive decrees against which they were protesting.

4. Honduras – In February, 2010, AAA members voted to adopt a resolution urging US President Obama and members of the US Congress to acknowledge and condemn the human rights violations that were committed by the de facto government in Honduras since the June 28° 2009 coup d’état; give support to progressive forces in Honduras striving to create a real democracy; work with allied countries to find a peaceful and democratic solution to the ongoing crisis in Honduras; and join other Latin American countries in withholding recognition of individuals selected in a subsequent election held November 29, 2009. The text of this AAA resolution can be found at: http://www.aaanet.org/issues/AAA-Honduras-Resolution.cfm.

**AMICUS CURIAE**

An “amicus curiae” (“friend of the court”) brief is where a legal opinion, expert testimony, or scholarly research findings are used to introduce concerns in a legal proceeding by someone who is not directly a party to the proceeding, has not been invited by any of the parties to the proceeding to assist the court, but has information that has a bearing on the case. The Association has, on certain occasions, offered an amicus brief based on research findings that have been published in our journals. Included among recent amicus briefs in which the Association has participated are:

1. *Varnum v. Brien* (same-sex marriage in Iowa) – AAA signed on to support the rights of six same-sex couples who filed suit in December 2005 in Polk County, Iowa, asking the court to uphold their right to marry under the Iowa Constitution and to strike down as unconstitutional the law in Iowa that excludes gay and lesbian couples from marriage.

2. *Greenberg v. National Geographic* (photo reproduction rights) – AAA supported the position of National Geographic, which held that a freelance photographer could not sue the magazine for reprinting photos originally taken for the magazine on its digital media outlets.

3. *Perry v. Schwarzenegger* (California Proposition 8) – AAA advocated for repealing Proposition 8, a state law, as supported by voters by ballot initiative that would have banned same-sex marriages in California.

4. *Lyons v. New Mexico Cultural Properties Review Committee* (Mt. Taylor – cultural resources protection) – AAA supported the position of the sovereign tribal governments of the area that the Mt. Taylor site should remain as a sacred site. An extinct volcano, Mount Taylor is considered sacred by the Navajo, Hopi, Zuni, Acoma and Laguna people and is an important pilgrimage site for members of at least 30 tribes.

5. *Fisher v. University of Texas* (affirmative action) – A student filed suit against the University of Texas after being denied admission. The student sued, believing he was denied admission while less qualified candidates of color were accepted. The AAA supported the University’s position that racial diversity should be a factor in admissions standards.
AAA TOPICAL STATEMENTS

Below is a list of issues that AAA has weighed in on in the past; the statements themselves are located online at http://www.aaanet.org/about/Policies/statements/. Attached to this memo, as an FYI, is a table of contents for a binder in the AAA office that contains topical statements/resolutions that the AAA has passed from 1949 to 1992.

1. Guidelines for Consideration of Proposed Public Statements, to include Motions from the Annual Business Meeting
5. Statement on Disabilities – January 1993
8. Statement on Evolution – April 2000
9. Statement on Confidentiality of Field Notes – March 2003
17. Statement on "Race" – May 1998
18. Statement on "Race" and Intelligence – December 1994


COMPANY BOYCOTTS

1. Coca-Cola (multinational) – In February, 2009, the AAA announced that it supports the Colombian union SINALTRAINAL’s call for a boycott of the Coca-Cola company and its products, and AAA calls on its members to do the same until Coca-Cola agrees in good faith with its workers. The resolution was adopted by the Executive Board at the recommendation of the AAA Labor Relations Commission and in response to a report by Lesley Gill, a specialist in Latin American human rights and political violence with American University. Her findings indicated that Coca-Cola had not been sufficiently proactive in protecting workers and their families in Colombia from intimidation and violence and that the right to organize unions had not been respected.
AAA INVESTMENTS

According to our investment advisor, the AAA portfolio currently has no funds invested in companies based in Israel or the West Bank. In addition, and although it is not the result of an explicit policy or strategy to avoid such investments, the AAA has no financial interest in companies identified by the wedivest.org campaign as having problematic investments/practices (Africa Israel, Caterpillar, Elbit Systems, G4S, Hewlett Packard, Motorola Solutions, Northrop Grumman, Sodastream, Veolia).

If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me.
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