



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Contact: Lauren Slepian
Phone: 609-744-4794

Citizen Petition Supporting Medical Liability Reform Delivered to the Senate

More than 14,000 signatures collected urging Congress to take action on reform

WASHINGTON, DC – Today, two leading health care groups sent a petition signed by 14,266 patients, physicians, and concerned citizens to members of the Senate Committee on Finance, urging them to include meaningful changes to our nation’s broken medical liability system during today’s markup of health care reform legislation.

“It is clear from our petition drive that there is widespread public support for medical liability reform,” said Doctors for Medical Liability Reform’s Chairman Stuart L. Weinstein, MD. “President Obama, Democrat and Republican Members of Congress, leading health care policy experts, and opinion leaders all agree that the current system costs too much, and does not serve the needs of patients. It is our hope that members of the Senate Finance Committee will listen to these important voices and include medical liability reform in the Senate’s health care bill,” said Weinstein.

“If Congress is truly serious about reforming our health care system, they must put the personal injury lawyers’ interests aside and include reforms to the medical liability system,” said Health Coalition on Liability and Access Chair Mike Stinson. “Reforming our medical liability system is essential to reduce costs and protect access to care for all patients. States across the country, like California and Texas, have enacted reforms with a proven track record for success that should be a model for reform at the federal level.

DMLR, a national grassroots organization that includes physicians and patients, and the HCLA, a broad national coalition of health care providers and medical liability insurers, joined forces to ensure that medical liability reform is addressed in the health care reform debate.

The proposal introduced thus far in the Senate Finance Committee Chairman’s Mark does not seriously address medical liability reform. Instead, the proposal expresses a “Sense of the Senate” that there should be consideration of state-based demonstration projects on liability reform.

While DMLR and HCLA believe that voluntary state demonstration projects may be a step in the right direction, the Senate’s mere expression of support is insufficient – these projects must be formalized and codified into law. Furthermore, state demonstration projects alone do not address the immediate need to lower health care costs and reduce the practice of defensive medicine.

For more information, visit www.hcla.org or www.protectpatientsnow.org.

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**HEALTH CARE LIABILITY EXPERTS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS
CONTACT LAUREN SLEPIAN, 609-744-4794**