



Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA, Executive Vice President, CEO

July 15, 2010

The Honorable Phil Gingrey, MD
U.S. House of Representatives
119 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Gingrey:

On behalf of the physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA), I am writing to express our sincere appreciation for the introduction of H.R. 5690, the "Meaningful End to Defensive Medicine & Aimless Lawsuits (MedMal) Act of 2010." Your legislation includes significant reforms that will help repair our nation's broken medical liability system and preserve patients' access to medical care.

The cost of our medical liability system is borne by everyone as defensive medicine adds billions of dollars to the cost of health care each year, translating into higher health care spending and higher health insurance premiums. Studies reveal that physicians are compelled to order more tests and procedures to protect themselves from medical liability lawsuits. Medical liability reforms are crucial to slowing the rising cost of health care and protecting patients' access to quality care.

The AMA strongly supports federal legislation based on state reforms that have been proven to be effective, such as the non-economic damage limitations in California and Texas. While AMA policy specifically calls for a \$250,000 federal cap on non-economic damages and we remain concerned with the tying of the cap to an early offer program as prescribed in H.R. 5690, we do support provisions contained in the bill that protect state liability reform laws and that modify the liability system to make it more fair and just for health care providers and their patients.

The AMA greatly appreciates your leadership on reforming our medical liability system, and we look forward to working with you to advance meaningful medical liability reforms at the federal level.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Maves". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Michael D. Maves, MD, MBA