



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

October 2, 2009

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker
U.S. House of Representatives
H-232 Capitol Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Pelosi:

The physician and medical student members of the American Medical Association (AMA) strongly urge you and your fellow Representatives to include meaningful medical liability reform as an essential component to health system reform legislation. The AMA supports federal grants for states to pursue alternative liability reforms, as proposed by Representative Bart Gordon's amendment to H.R. 3200. In addition, we recommend that it be clarified that: (1) the incentive program is voluntary and available to all states; (2) states should have the flexibility to explore a wide range of liability reform programs including: health courts, early disclosure and compensation programs, administrative determination of compensation model, expert witness qualifications, and liability protections for use of evidence-based medicine guidelines; and (3) the pursuit of alternative liability reforms should in no way be construed as overriding medical liability reforms already enacted or to be enacted by states.

Meaningful medical liability reform is crucial to protecting patients' access to quality care and slowing the rising cost of health 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, which means higher Medicare spending and health insurance premiums for patients.

We appreciate your leadership and urge your support for maintaining Representative Gordon's amendment, and including the above-mentioned recommendations, in H.R. 3200 as reported to the Floor of the House by the Rules Committee.

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