

230,000 Specialty Physicians Commend President Bush's Trip to Southern Illinois Highlighting the Growing Access to Care Crisis and Demand that the U.S. Senate Finally Take Action on Medical Liability Reform  
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WASHINGTON, Jan. 5 /U.S. Newswire/ -- Doctors for Medical Liability Reform (DMLR), a coalition of 230,000 specialty physicians, announced its support today for President Bush's continued efforts to inform the American public about the need to pass meaningful medical liability reform in the U.S. Congress this year. DMLR feels that Bush's visit to Collinsville, Ill., an area in Southern Illinois that has seen an exodus of specialty physicians, signifies the scope of this crisis -- a crisis affecting millions of American's access to care, thousands of local economies and adding an undue burden on the already explosive state of healthcare in the United States.

Dr. Stuart Weinstein, chairman of DMLR and a practicing Orthopaedic surgeon, believes that the President's goal of national meaningful medical liability reform should be passed by the U.S. Congress immediately because America's access to care crisis is getting worse every day.

"Illinois is a crisis state by all accounts," Weinstein said. "In the south you have doctors leaving to go to Missouri and in the north you have doctors leaving to go to Wisconsin, both places have much lower rates. Doctors are closing their practices and subsequently, a patchwork of healthcare has developed."

During the 2004 DMLR was active in states that were battlegrounds in several key U.S. Senate races, including North Carolina, South Carolina, Washington State, Oklahoma and Georgia. By using highly effective 30-minute broadcast newsmagazines, DMLR informed millions of patients about the urgent need for national medical liability reform. DMLR also ran several print advertisements highlighting the issue throughout the summer, into the political conventions and right up until Election Day. In total, the group spent over \$10 million advocating the need for reform.

"The healthcare community understands the gravity of the situation," Weinstein said. "So we have banded together. We were strong last year, but we're even stronger this year."

DMLR plans to be actively involved during the legislative season, promoting the need for medical liability reform by continuing to educate the public about the growing access to care crisis and asking U.S. Senators to sign the DMLR pledge to support national medical liability reform.

DMLR is coalition completely funded by more than 230,000 specialty physicians throughout the United States. DMLR is dedicated to the passage of national medical liability reform -- reform that has traditionally been stalled in the U.S. Senate. To learn more, please log on to: <http://www.protectpatientsnow.org>