



# Medical Liability Reform

## NATIONAL POLL SHOWS AMERICANS BELIEVE ACCESS TO HEALTH CARE THREATENED BY MEDICAL LIABILITY CRISIS

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### Health Care Access At Risk

- More than 8 in 10 (84 percent) of Americans surveyed believe the availability and quality of health care is threatened because rising medical liability costs and the lack of medical liability insurance coverage in some states are forcing doctors and health care providers to abandon the practice of medicine.

### Cost of Health Care Rising Due to Excessive Litigation

- Almost three-quarters (71 percent) say that one of the primary factors driving up health care expenses for all people is the rising cost of medical liability lawsuits.

### High Number of Lawsuits Unjustified

- More than six in ten (61 percent) of those surveyed believe that the number of medical liability lawsuits is "higher than justified."

### Overwhelming Support for Common-Sense Reforms

- By a huge margin (76 percent), Americans support a law that guarantees full payment for lost wages and expenses, but reasonably limits awards for non-economic damages. Three-quarters of those surveyed favor a limit on the amount of money personal injury trial lawyers can collect from the settlements awarded to their clients.

*A nationwide poll of 1,000 adults reveals that more than 8 in 10 Americans believe the medical liability crisis is denying patients access to needed health care by pushing good doctors to abandon their medical practices. Americans also believe there are too many unjustified medical liability lawsuits, and that unmerited litigation increases health care costs for everyone. An overwhelming majority of Americans supports legislative reforms to the medical liability system that guarantee full compensation for economic damages, place reasonable limits on non-economic damages, and limit fees for trial lawyers. The poll was conducted in February 2003, for the Health Coalition on Liability and Access by Wirthlin Worldwide. The margin of error is +/- 3.1 percentage points at a 95 percent confidence level.*