



NEWS

AMERICANS FOR TAX REFORM

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Senate Democrats Prevent Access to Healthcare: Pregnancy and Trauma Care Restricted

Cloture vote to allow debate on legislation fails 49-48

WASHINGTON—Grover Norquist, President of Americans for Tax Reform, expressed his disgust with Senate Democrats efforts to block improved access for women to obstetrical and gynecological care. **The Pregnancy and Trauma Care Access Protection Act of 2004, S. 2077, failed to gain the necessary 60 votes needed to proceed to the Senate floor for debate and passage.**

Health care providers have faced difficulty obtaining affordable medical liability coverage. The problem has now reached a crisis level and women are being deprived equal access to crucial medical care. Qualified physicians are being forced to leave the women's health field due to high insurance costs.

“Clearly some Senate Democrats care more about political contributions from their trial lawyer buddies than providing women with the quality care their bodies need,” said Grover Norquist **“Instead of moving to protect OB/GYNS and emergency care workers from frivolous lawsuits that raise the cost of malpractice insurance premiums, Senate Democrats decided to give into special interests.”**

Rising jury awards and settlements are increasing physicians' malpractice insurance premiums. Close to 60% of every health care dollar spent on health care liability goes to administrative costs and attorneys' fees. In addition, according to the American Medical Association, 19 states now face a medical liability crisis, 25 states show problem signs, and 6 states report “okay” status. While the crisis is reminiscent of that of the 1970s, the difference today is the increase in large jury awards.

In 1998, the Congressional Budget Office estimated that the federal government would save \$1.5 billion over 10 years if medical malpractice reform were enacted. The General Accounting Office also estimated additional defense medicine savings of over \$10 billion. While the Pregnancy and Trauma Care Act only addresses one piece of the Medical Reform pie, the Senate has failed to act on the legislation to provide women with the quality care.

“Medical liability reform is one of the most important issues that we face in the United States,” said Norquist. **“Unfortunately Senate Democrats would rather see hospitals close their doors, doctors to refuse to see new patients and leave for other states instead of giving up their campaign donations.”**

Americans for Tax Reform is a non-partisan coalition of taxpayers and taxpayer groups who oppose all federal and state tax increases. For more information or to arrange an interview please contact Jonathan Collegio at (202) 785-0266 or by email at jcollegio@atr.org.

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