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February 16, 2011

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Health Coalition Encouraged by Medical Liability Reform Vote
House Judiciary Committee Actions Mark Important Step in Final Passage

Washington, DC -- The House Committee on the Judiciary met today to mark up H.R. 5, the “Help Accessible, Efficient, Low-cost, Timely Healthcare (HEALTH) Act,” and move this medical liability reform measure closer to a vote by the full House of Representatives.

The bill passed the Judiciary Committee by a vote 18 to 15. It now heads to the Energy & Commerce Committee for consideration.

“The HCLA is extremely pleased that the leadership in the House is moving forward quickly and taking legislative action to reform our broken medical liability system,” said HCLA chair Mike Stinson. “Comprehensive medical liability reforms, like those included in the HEALTH Act, will help control costs and keep our health care system accessible for all patients.”

The HEALTH Act mirrors proven medical liability reforms already in place in states such as California and Texas by placing a reasonable limit on non-economic damages, enacting a statute of limitations, allowing for periodic payment of future damages, and limiting personal injury attorneys’ contingency fees.

In 2009, the Congressional Budget Office found that a reform package modeled on the HEALTH Act would reduce the federal budget deficit by an estimated \$54 billion over the next 10 years.

“The HEALTH Act has bipartisan support and puts reforms in place that favor patients over personal injury lawyers. We look forward to working with the Administration and the Congress to enact comprehensive federal medical liability reform,” said Stinson.

The House has passed the HEALTH Act in four previous Congresses, and related medical liability reform legislation cleared the House an additional eight times since 1995.

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HEALTH CARE LIABILITY EXPERTS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS
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For more details, visit www.hcla.org. The Health Coalition on Liability and Access is a national advocacy coalition representing physicians, hospitals, health care liability insurers, employers, health care providers and consumers. HCLA believes federal legislation is needed to bring fairness, timeliness and cost-effectiveness to America’s medical liability system.