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Health Coalition Encouraged by Inclusion of Liability Reform in “Gang of Six” Deficit Reduction Plan

WASHINGTON, DC – The Health Coalition on Liability and Access was encouraged by the inclusion of medical liability reform in the deficit reduction plan released yesterday by the bipartisan “Gang of Six” in the Senate.

“The HCLA commends the Gang of Six in the Senate for recognizing the value of comprehensive medical liability reform in the ongoing debate over how to reduce our spiraling national debt,” HCLA Chair Mike Stinson said.

“Our nation’s broken medical liability system increases health care costs for all Americans at a time when we can least afford it, threatens patient access to quality medical care, and increases our national deficit,” Stinson added.

The proposal by the Gang of Six is the latest of several bipartisan deficit reduction plans to include comprehensive medical liability reform. The National Commission on Fiscal Responsibility and Reform, led by Alan Simpson and Erskine Bowles, endorsed medical liability reform in draft proposals late last year. The Bipartisan Policy Center’s Debt Reduction Task Force also noted that limiting non-economic damages in medical liability cases could save billions of dollars over the next 10 years.

The non-partisan Congressional Budget Office found that the HEALTH Act, a comprehensive medical liability reform bill that includes reasonable limits on non-economic damages, would reduce federal spending by \$50 billion from 2012-2021, and reduce federal deficits by \$62 billion.

“Any serious action on the part of Congress to reduce our national deficit must include medical liability reform, and the HCLA encourages leaders in Washington to take advantage of this key opportunity to fix a liability system that does not serve the needs of patients,” Stinson said.

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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.