

Help Is On The Way!

Last month's letter was a litany of obstructions and obstacles towards a solution to the liability crisis facing physicians nationwide and in Arizona. While the situation has not improved, and in fact this month we had carriers withdraw from the Arizona market, help is on the way. A national alliance of physicians called Doctors for Medical Liability Reform is leading the charge for federal tort reform. This alliance is comprised of over 230,000 doctors who feel strongly that Congress must act now if accessibility to care is to continue. Arizona has now joined their ranks and we welcome all of you to come on board (www.protectpatientsnow.org/).

The Arizona Medical Association has formed a committee headed by Dr. Joseph Hanss to organize our state's efforts and outline a plan for action. This committee will examine all options and anyone interested in getting involved can call the ArMA office. I chair the federal reform committee and continue to pursue federal action. In March, Senator Jon Kyl met with many of our new Society members and lent his voice to the growing chorus for reform. That chorus includes both our U.S. Senators and most of our congressional delegation. The state reform effort is being chaired by Dr. George Deckey. He sees the battle from the front lines as a surgeon and physician in Yuma (home of major insurance increases).

Towards this end, Senator Kyl welcomed to Arizona Mr. John Thune, candidate for the U.S. Senate challenging Senator Tom Daschle of South Dakota. Senator Kyl pointed out that probably only with a change in the Senate makeup can reform happen. Senator Daschle has been the leader of the obstructionists' filibuster of the tort reform bill. I encourage your support of Mr. Thune who has an excellent chance for victory moving our efforts forward (www.JohnThune.com). Physicians are busy people with little extra time to get involved; however this year may be different. What may seem like a small financial outlay can add up to a big boost in a campaign.

We have published in this issue a page from the website of Doctors for Medical Liability Reform and urge you to review it. They may not bring a bulldozer for removing obstacles but together we can push forward.

See you next month.

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President