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Chicago Medical Malpractice Lawyer Speaks Out Against Health Care Reform Bill

CHICAGO, February 21, 2011 –Chicago medical malpractice lawyer Steven Levin of Levin & Perconti asks citizens to stand up against H.R. 5, the Help Efficient, Accessible, Low Cost, Timely, Health Care (HEALTH) Act of 2011 which was recently introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives and approved by the House Judiciary Committee. Levin argues that the bill threatens patient safety, and Congress should instead turn its attention to decreasing preventable medical errors.

H.R. 5 takes aim at patients' rights by proposing a cap on noneconomic damages for victims of medical negligence at \$250,000. It also aims to reduce the amount of time victims have to file a claim from two years to one year after the injury is discovered. The bill is a reincarnation of the HEALTH Act of 2005, which was proposed by the 109th Congress, but never became a law.

According to the Institute of Medicine, over 98,000 people die every year because of medical errors. These often-preventable harms are costly, and reducing them would lower health care spending. "Instead of denying patients access to the courts, Congress should focus on new approaches to prevent medical malpractice from occurring in the first place," said Levin.

"Lawsuits allow victims to hold doctors, hospitals, and insurance companies responsible for their mistakes," Levin explained. "When health care providers are sued and required to pay damages to victims, they are motivated to improve patient care to avoid being sued again. If lawmakers reduce the threat or consequences of medical malpractice lawsuits, we will see a dramatic decrease in the quality of health care, and an increase in health care costs."

Levin added, "Many of our clients' lives are devastated because of mistakes by doctors, nurses, and hospital caregivers. It is important to preserve your right to seek justice for these mistakes. I encourage citizens of Illinois, and throughout the country, to contact their Members of Congress to speak out against H.R. 5, the HEALTH Act of 2011."

Levin & Perconti is a nationally-renowned Chicago law firm representing clients throughout Illinois in all types of personal injury, medical malpractice, and wrongful death litigation. The lawyers at Levin & Perconti have recovered over \$350 million on behalf of clients and are committed to protecting and vindicating the rights of people who are injured by the negligence of others. Please contact the firm at (312) 332-2872 or visit www.levinperconti.com for more information, or to contact us online.

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