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## **Health Coalition Endorses ACCESS Act to Reform Medical Liability System**

WASHINGTON, DC – The Health Coalition on Liability and Access (HCLA) today announced its support of H.R. 3656, the Accessible Care by Curbing Excessive LawSuitS Act (ACCESS Act), a comprehensive medical liability reform bill introduced by Representative Richard Hudson (R-N.C.).

The *ACCESS Act* is modeled after proven reforms already in place in Texas, California, and many other states around the country that have improved access to affordable healthcare by increasing the number of practicing physicians and reducing medical lawsuit abuse.

The bill ensures full and unlimited recovery of economic damages for deserving patients for expenses such as lost wages, past and future medical expenses, rehabilitation costs, and other out-of-pocket expenses. The legislation also permits the additional recovery of up to \$250,000 for non-economic damages, such as damages awarded for pain and suffering.

By enacting a reasonable statute of limitations for filing lawsuits, and limiting attorney fees, the bill will ensure a speedier resolution to claims and that damage awards go to patients – not personal injury lawyers. The bill also seeks to reduce needless litigation by encouraging more open communications between patients and providers, and weeding out meritless lawsuits. Finally, the *ACCESS Act* also protects the rights of states who have already enacted their own medical liability reforms or choose to do so in the future.

“Reforming our broken medical liability system is a necessary step in preserving access to care for patients across the country while reducing lawsuit abuse,” said HCLA chair Mike Stinson. “The HCLA supports the *ACCESS Act* and looks forward to working in a bipartisan manner to pass this bill and ensure the system efficiently and fairly works for patients and health care providers alike.”

Recent estimates from the Congressional Budget Office (CBO) and the staff of the Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) estimate that the provisions included in the bill would reduce federal spending by about \$14 billion over five years, and almost \$50 billion over 10 years.

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**HEALTH CARE LIABILITY EXPERTS AVAILABLE FOR INTERVIEWS**  
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*For more details, visit [www.hcla.org](http://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.*