

Pa. health leaders warn of impact from \$180M liability case

[Stacy Wescoe//July 24, 2025//](#)

Leaders from associations representing [Pennsylvania health care](#) providers and businesses are responding to a large [medical liability](#) ruling.

The leaders released a formal statement about the implications that the Pennsylvania Superior Court's ruling in *Hagans v. Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania* will have on [access to care](#) and [economic competitiveness](#) across the state.

A Philadelphia jury has awarded over \$180 million to a 5-year-old boy with cerebral palsy and brain damage as a result of a birth injury.

It's believed to be the largest medical malpractice award ever given in the state.

The health care leaders expressed concern over the amount of the verdict.

"As Pennsylvania health care and business leaders, we are deeply concerned about the Commonwealth's worsening medical liability climate, and the consequences for patient care, provider sustainability, and our broader economy," they said in a statement.

"Pennsylvania—and, in particular, Philadelphia—already has a national reputation for exorbitant verdicts in medical liability cases. That reputation now risks becoming a crisis due to a ruling that dramatically expands when businesses and health care organizations can be found liable. In *Hagans v. Hospital of the University of Pennsylvania*, the Pennsylvania Superior Court, departing from well-established legal standards, recently upheld a \$200 million vicarious liability verdict against a hospital without a jury finding that any individual provider was negligent.

The leaders said that if the decision is allowed to stand, they believe it will embolden more extreme verdicts, further driving up medical liability [insurance premiums](#) and discourage providers from practicing in Pennsylvania.

They also said it would strain a health care system already grappling with financial challenges, workforce shortages, and operational barriers and could result in facility closures, job losses, and reduced access to care, especially in underserved areas.

"The ruling also raises serious concerns for other industries. It introduces legal uncertainty that could extend beyond health care, increasing the cost of doing business and making Pennsylvania a more difficult place to attract and retain investment. A weakened health

care system also erodes the foundation of a healthy, productive workforce on which all employers depend. Health care deserts turn into economic deserts.”

The leaders said that patients and families deserve a fair and just process for resolving malpractice claims. But they said that process must not come at the cost of access to care for entire communities.

“We urge policymakers and the courts to recognize the broad implications of this decision and take steps to restore balance to Pennsylvania’s liability system.”

The following leaders jointly released the statement:

- Nicole Stallings, President & CEO, The Hospital and Healthsystem Association of Pennsylvania
- Luke Bernstein, President & CEO, Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry
- Zach Shamberg, President & CEO, Pennsylvania Health Care Association
- Martin Raniowski, CEO, Pennsylvania Medical Society
- Chellie Cameron, President & CEO, The Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia