



# Pennsylvania MEDICAL SOCIETY®

July 24, 2009

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J. James Rohack, MD, AMA President  
Cecil B. Wilson, MD, AMA President-Elect  
Nancy H. Nielson, MD, PhD, Immediate Past President

Dear Doctors Rohack, Wilson, and Nielson:

The Pennsylvania Medical Society recognizes the American Medical Association's (AMA) active engagement on the evolving issue of health system reform and the tactical decision to "be at the table." We appreciate the AMA's early participation in this critical debate, and support your ongoing efforts to keep physicians centrally involved in the process of comprehensive health system reform. At the same time, we encourage you going forward to refine your position to reflect fundamental reforms that will be good for patient care and for physicians.

The Pennsylvania Medical Society Board of Trustees fully supports the four AMA principles of Pluralism, Freedom of Choice, Freedom of Practice, and Universal Access in the development of health care reform, as adopted by our AMA House of Delegates in June. However, we strongly believe that comprehensive medical liability reform is essential to ensure access to quality health care going forward. The Pennsylvania Medical Society, therefore, believes that any final legislation on health system reform must also address the important issue of meaningful liability reform.

Having just concluded a two-day Board retreat focused on health system reform, we are in the process of finalizing a set of "guiding principles" that will be used to evaluate health system reform proposals developed at the state and federal levels. The four AMA principles identified above will provide us with a strong foundation on which to develop these.

As health system reform continues to take shape at the federal level, there is a need to press for stronger action in several areas:

- Comprehensive medical liability reform must be included in any discussion about health system reform;
- Health insurance reforms should result in the creation of competitive markets;
- Physician autonomy to compete in the marketplace must be maintained; and
- All reforms as their primary focus must promote quality and safe, convenient, and efficient care for patients.

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This is the time for physicians to work together to advocate for our patients and their access to quality health care. Should you have any questions or need our assistance, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Sincerely,

Daniel J. Glunk, MD  
President

Bruce A. MacLeod, MD  
Chair