



PO Box 78096
WASHINGTON, DC 20013-8096
WWW.HCLA.ORG

Letter to the Editor, Wall Street Journal

Regarding the story on recent reductions in lawsuits (*We Won't See You in Court: The Era of Lawsuits is Waning, July 24*), we would like to clarify some facts about the prevalence of medical lawsuit abuse and its impact on healthcare.

Nearly two-thirds of medical lawsuits filed are without merit and are thus dropped, withdrawn or dismissed. For cases that move through the courts, healthcare providers prevail 90% of the time. But it still costs an average of \$42,000 to defend those claims that result in no payment.

It should also be noted that most states that cap damages limit only non-economic damages, which are purely subjective and immeasurable. The overwhelming majority of states place no limit on compensation for economic losses like lost wages and medical bills.

This means, for example, that in states like Texas with reasonable limits on non-economic damages, all patients — including stay-at-home mothers and fathers — are eligible for the full value of services they provide and future lost wages, and children are eligible for lost lifetime earnings.

While the overall number of tort suits may have decreased, meritless medical liability lawsuits still stand in the way of resolving claims of deserving patients.

Michael C Stinson
Chair, Health Coalition on Liability and Access
PIAA

Katie Orrico
Vice Chair, Health Coalition on Liability and Access
American Association of Neurological Surgeons