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SCHAKOWSKY SAYS DOCTORS IN ILLINOIS MISDIAGNOSED MEDICAL MALPRACTICE INSURANCE CRISIS

STUDY FINDS INSURANCE COMPANIES, NOT LAWSUITS, ARE REASON RATES SKYROCKET FOR ILLINOIS DOCTORS

WASHINGTON, D.C. - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL), a member of the Energy and Commerce Committee, today said that doctors in Illinois misdiagnosed the medical malpractice insurance crisis. Schakowsky pointed to an Americans for Insurance Reform study which found that insurance companies, not lawsuits, are causing malpractice insurance rates to rise for Illinois doctors.

"Attacking the civil justice system and taking away the rights of injured consumers in the name of reform will not lower health care costs for patients or insurance rates for doctors. Doctors in Springfield today should be demanding regulation of the insurance industry because the evidence is clear: medical malpractice payouts have absolutely nothing to do with their premiums," Schakowsky said.

"Doctors should also be aggressively treating the epidemic of medical errors that kill up to 98,000 hospital patients each year. These steps will bring real reform to our medical malpractice system," Schakowsky added.

According to the study released earlier this week, since 1991, in Illinois, jury awards and settlements have actually fallen when adjusted for medical inflation, and "[t]he real reason medical malpractice insurance rates have fluctuated so dramatically in Illinois is market forces - not, as the insurance industry claims, because of a sudden massive increase in medical malpractice jury awards or payouts, which, in constant dollars, have been decreasing for the last decade."