

Medical Malpractice Hearing Produces No Agreement

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By John Ostapkovich

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A hearing on medical malpractice insurance reform produced no agreement -- even among its panelists.

The narrow issue before a Congressional hearing, chaired by Bucks County's Jim Greenwood, was his bill that would set a national cap, somewhat flexible, on pain and suffering judgments.

He says jackpot awards put insurers in a bind:

"They simply cannot make reasonable business decisions of their risk when they don't know with each passing year what juries will award."

But Congresswoman Jan Schakowsky of Illinois says juries are getting a bad rap:

"Premiums charged do not track losses paid but instead rise and fall with the state of the economy. In any case, malpractice insurance costs have risen at half the rate of medical inflation."