

Wisconsin Coalition for Civil Justice

TO: Members, Senate Committee on Health & Human Services

FROM: Bill G. Smith, President & Jim Hough, Legislative Director

DATE: October 17, 2007

RE: Senate Bill 138

The Wisconsin Coalition for Civil Justice is a broad-based coalition that includes small business, large corporations, professional societies, trade associations and non-profit organizations. Although the membership of the coalition is diverse, coalition members are in strong agreement about the role of **medical malpractice reform as a key component of reducing the cost of health care in Wisconsin.**

The American Medical Association estimates that for every \$1 spent on medical malpractice insurance premiums, doctors spend \$2.70 performing unnecessary tests and beefing up record keeping in order to avoid litigation. These costs are, of course, passed through to those who purchase medical services, **increasing their medical bills by \$36-billion a year**, according to a study by the Lewin-VHI, Inc. research firm.

This unnecessary add-on to the cost of health care takes us in the wrong direction to reducing the cost of health insurance.

WCCJ also believes that the current caps for loss of companionship provide fairness, predictability and equal treatment regardless of income or status. Removing or increasing these caps will encourage excessive litigation or legal fees.

The members of the Wisconsin Coalition for Civil Justice, thereby, respectfully urge your opposition to passage of Senate Bill 138.

Thank you for your consideration.