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NEWS RELEASE

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CENTER FOR JUSTICE & DEMOCRACY APPLAUDS NEW STUDY FINDING NO MEDICAL MALPRACTICE LITIGATION “CRISIS”

The Center for Justice & Democracy applauds the meticulous work of four scholars – three law professors and one professor of law and medicine – who researched years of litigation in Texas, and found that neither jury verdicts nor payouts to patients were responsible for causing skyrocketing premiums for doctors.¹ The study was released today.

The Texas study, along with others done in past years of other states, undermines one of the central assertions of those pursuing misdirected efforts to cap damages for patients as a way of bringing down doctors’ insurance rates. Payments, total costs, and jury verdicts have all remained stable and have not driven recent premium increases. The causes and solutions to that problem lie with a largely unregulated insurance industry.

We hope that state legislatures and Congress will be inspired by this latest study, as well as the recent actions by Washington State’s insurance commissioner to refund excessive premiums to doctors, to explore real reforms that will end the unfair price-gouging of doctors. Lawmakers must stop blaming juries, lawyers and injured patients for a problem that is clearly not their fault – the price-gouging of doctors by insurers around the country.

¹ “Stability, Not Crisis: Medical Malpractice Claim Outcomes in Texas, 1988-2000,” released by The Center on Lawyers, Civil Justice, and the Media at the University of Texas School of Law, studied data from the Texas Department of Insurance from 1988-2002. Released March 10, 2005.