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News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Federal Medical Liability Reform Legislation Passes U.S. House of Representatives

Rockville, MD (June 28, 2017) – PIAA, the leading association representing the medical and healthcare professional liability (MPL/HPL) insurance community, today praised the U.S. House of Representatives for passing the Protecting Access to Care Act (H.R. 1215)—the first comprehensive medical liability reform legislation to be passed by either chamber of Congress in more than five years.

“This vote represents a major victory for tort reform advocates,” said PIAA Vice President of Government Relations & Public Policy Mike Stinson. “We are now one step closer to enacting federal medical liability reforms that will reduce the non-meritorious litigation that undermines the physician-patient relationship. This legislation will truly benefit both patients and healthcare professionals alike.”

“PIAA applauds the House for making medical liability reform and patient access to care a high-priority healthcare policy initiative in this Congress and encourages the Senate to do the same,” Stinson continued. “H.R. 1215 will help ensure fair and timely compensation to injured patients, improve access to patient care, and promote affordable and accessible medical liability insurance coverage.”

PIAA has taken a leadership role in advocating for the legislation, which models the proven reforms from states like California and Texas. H.R. 1215 includes unlimited compensation for economic losses, reasonable caps on subjective non-economic damages, limits on attorney contingency fees, periodic payment of future damages, and a statute of limitations. Unlike previous federal bills, however, the bill is focused solely on healthcare professionals and entities, includes more flexibility for states than previous federal medical liability reform bills, and applies only to medical liability claims involving care provided through the expenditure of federal dollars (including federal tax benefits).

“I would like to thank PIAA members for their active role and support in helping to advance this important bill in the U.S. Congress,” Stinson said. “We have been pleased to work with numerous PIAA members as well as our colleagues in the healthcare community to move this important legislation forward. This process demonstrates the vital role played by PIAA and its members in engaging in a united effort to effect change.”

The final vote on the bill was 218-210. A companion bill will next be introduced in the U.S. Senate. “Medical liability reform faces significant challenges in the U.S. Senate,” noted Stinson. “But PIAA is already employing a new advocacy strategy to promote this legislation.”

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PIAA is the leading international association representing medical and healthcare professional liability insurance companies, risk retention groups, captives, trusts, and other entities with a commitment to the quality delivery of care. PIAA members insure more than 2 million healthcare professionals around the world—doctors, dentists, nurses and nurse practitioners, and other healthcare providers—including more than two-thirds of America’s private practicing physicians. PIAA members also insure more than 3,000 hospitals and 5,000 medical facilities.