



February 14, 2011

RE: HB 495 – Apology Bill

To The Honorable Members of the House Judiciary Committee:

The Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry respectfully requests your support of House Bill 495 sponsored by Representative Gillespie which is scheduled to be considered by the House Judiciary Committee on Tuesday, February 15, 2011.

HB 495 would permit a medical professional to acknowledge, express empathy for, and take responsibility of an unforeseen outcome without the risk of retaliatory litigation based solely on the statements made at the time of the apology.

Fear of litigation may hamper a doctor's full disclosure of unanticipated outcomes. For this reason, 35 other states have enacted similar legislation and have created disclosure programs for health care providers. This legislation encourages full disclosure of mistakes and errors in judgment by eliminating fear on the part of health care providers that their admissions will be used against them in court. It allows health care providers to display natural expressions of empathy and compassion to patients without fear of reprisal.

HB 495 will cost taxpayers nothing, and can reduce the number of medical malpractice lawsuits, which ultimately could lead to lower health care costs. The PA Chamber encourages you to support HB 495 which is a common sense, consumer and provider friendly approach to lawsuit abuse reform.

If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at 717 720-5580 or sdenisco@pachamber.com.

Sincerely,

Sam Denisco
Director, Government Affairs