

MMPAC Survey 2010
(The Maryland State Medical Society's PAC)

1. Low reimbursement rates of the health insurance carriers and HMOs in Maryland are having a damaging effect on medicine in the state. Low reimbursements make it difficult for the state to recruit new young physicians, as well as physicians who will answer emergency calls. According to the Maryland Health Care Commission, Maryland ranks in the bottom 25 percent of states regarding insurance reimbursement rates for physicians. Do you support legislation that would level the playing field, and improve physician payments?

_____ Favor

_____ Oppose

2. Health insurance companies require doctors to obtain numerous pre-authorizations before a patient receives a procedure, treatment or drug. Doctors' offices spend an inordinate amount of time in complying with such preauthorization requests. Do you support legislation that would limit the ability of health insurance companies to require such pre-authorizations?

_____ Favor

_____ Oppose

3. In order to avert a medical malpractice insurance crisis in the 1980s, the General Assembly enacted tort reform. These legislative efforts worked well as the price of medical malpractice insurance stabilized and doctors were no longer forced out of the business because of malpractice premiums, until recently. In 2005, the General Assembly worked to stabilize the medical malpractice market when premiums were again spinning out of control. One of the efforts was to lower the "cap" on economic damages (pain and suffering) in medical malpractice lawsuits. Even though the Maryland "cap" remains one of the highest in the United States, most experts believe that it is the primary reason that malpractice insurance rates have stabilized. Plaintiffs' lawyers have tried to alter or remove this "cap." What is your position on the present statutory cap on non-economic damages?

_____ Favor

_____ Oppose

4. A majority of states do not allow a doctor's "apology" or explanation after a bad medical outcome to be used in court against the doctor. Experience shows that such a rule encourages doctors to talk to patients and actually limits the filing of lawsuits. As to such an apology law, do you?

_____ Favor

_____ Oppose