


## FORIDA <br> INBRIEF

State Unemployment Figures Inflated, Trombetta Reports





 Most Dangerous To Testify



 State Fish Designated






State Files Suit Over Dump Fire

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 Gainesville Builder Reveals Pressures, Gurney Blacklist



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Dickinson Tagged As 'Scape Goat'




Selling Seminole County Is Must


BERRY'S WORLD


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## WORLD <br> INBRIEF

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 Strike Harms Farmers

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HOSPITAL NOTES


Henry Block has 17 reasons why you
should come to us for income tox help

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BRISSON FUNERAL HOME



## MEDICAL CRISIS

## AN OPEN LETTER TO OUR PATIENTS

Exhorbitant increases in medical professional liability insurance premiums have created a severe crisis in health care. Premiums have increased $\mathbf{7 , 0 0 0 \%}$ in the past twenty years, including a proposed $\mathbf{6 0 0 \%}$ increase since December 1974. For some surgical specialists in our community, this adds up to a premium of over $\$ 20,000$ a year. It now appears that such insurance may even become unavailable in Florida no later than December of this year. Unless this problem is solved immediately, continuity and quality of medical care are threatened. Physicians cannot practice without liability insurance, but neither they, nor ultimately their patients, can continue to pay its spiraling costs. We are writing this letter so that you, our patients, will be better informed on the sublect
Insurance companies claim that they actually lose money on medical liability insurance and this claim is supported by the fact that the insurance is becoming unavailable in many areas. What happens then to money paid in premiums? Eventually about $16^{\circ}$ of each dollar goes to an injured party. Aside from a small amount for administrative costs, the hugh balance goes mostly for legal fees for both sides. Within a very short time there will have to be a significant surcharge added to physicians' fees simply to pay for the insurance premiums which in turn go mostly for attorneys' fees. Can society afford that?
Unfortunately the increase caused by higher premiums in just the tip of the iceberg. There is a much larger add-on for cost of practicing defensive medicine. Because of the recent frequency of profesil) ther is necessary to order multiple laboratory tests an Physician offen feels that dety continue to pay for such a wasteful system? We think not.

## occurs.

Physicians have the right to practice their profession free from fear of life-time financial disaster as a result. o unjust liability action. We must increase the efficiency of the system so that the injured party receives
a much larger percent of the premium money and increase the fairness so that compensation is in proportion to actual injury.

What can we do? We must all contact our state and federal legislators and insist that immediate steps be take ocorrect the current problem. Here are some specific recommendations which require legislative action for implementation:

1. 40\% of the total award. Contingency fees have been limited in New Jersey,
2. Place a ceiling on damages by establishing a workmen's compensation type of program with an arbitration board.

## 3. Eliminate punifive damages.

4. Limplities the coilf. This the res ipsa loquifur-i.e, the thing speaks for itself. Under this concept the existence of injury his stop has been taken in Alaska.
5. Establish an absolute statute of limitations of no more than two years from the time of iniury.
6. Eact emergency stopgap legislation to assure uninterrupted availability of medical liability insurance and medical

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this letter. Please communicate with your state and federal legislators about this crisis in medical care. We would appreciate any suggestions or comments you might care to make.

| Churles Adkive, M.D. | gau R. Day, M.D. | m. M.D. | gekum Mergat, M.D. | Widilim Rape, M.D. |  |
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| Robert Bewier, M.D. | V. Garay, M.D. | Themas Carger, W.D. |  | Robett Rosomand, IM.D | Reivert Stendsen, M.D. |
| Frunklin Clauts, M.D. | Sarge Canes, M.D. | Clyde Mearde, M.D. | Cuis Peres, IU.D. | Russel $K$. Shan IMD. | Surtiaga Valle, M.D. |
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 Carter Withdraws



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Pilot Resolves Fear Of Flying


Marriage Applications




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Lake Of Woods Association Organizes


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## Pink Ladies Are Seminole

## Hospital's Sunshine Brigade



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by Larry Lewis


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by Howie Schneider



## Evening Herald

Water Loss Report Sought For Lawmakers
Askew's Help Sought In St. Johns' Drainage Problem
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Legislators Debate
Comptroller Issue






Zoo Officials To Seek More Funds From Seminole Board

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Detectives Probing Fatal Shooting Of Oviedo Man





Action '76 Items Must


Second Union Seeks Right To County Teacher Talks
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