

American Medical Association

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FLORIDA PHYSICIANS JOIN NATIONAL ACTION AGAINST HEALTH PLAN ABUSES

CHICAGO -- The American Medical Association (AMA) supports physicians in Florida who today joined their colleagues across the country in taking some major health insurers to court - both federal and state court - to get health plans to stop the outrageous business conduct that hurts patients and that is driving physicians out of their profession.

The Florida Medical Association joins a class-action lawsuit claiming the health plans are violating federal civil racketeering laws and endangering patient care. The RICO suits name some of the country's largest insurers including Aetna, United Healthcare, CIGNA, Wellpoint, Humana and Pacificare. The previous lawsuits were filed by the California Medical Association (CMA), Medical Association of Georgia (MAG) and the Texas Medical Association (TMA).

"Florida's physicians are speaking out with one voice loud and clear that they are fed up. AMA has heard this message throughout the country, and we support physicians who believe they have exhausted all means of getting these health insurers to allow appropriate care to be delivered and then to pay plan physicians in accordance with the deadlines established in state law," said AMA President-Elect Yank D. Coble, Jr., MD, who is a Jacksonville, Fla., physician. "Physicians believe they are backed into a corner, with no remedy except the courts."

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