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## Former Head of American Medical Association Comments on Obama's Healthcare Speech

*President Gives Good Diagnosis but Prescribes Wrong Treatment*

WASHINGTON--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Statement from [Dr. Donald Palmisano](#), spokesman for the [Coalition to Protect Patients' Rights](#) and the former president of the American Medical Association (2003-2004) in response to President Obama's speech to the American Medical Association House of Delegates Annual Meeting in Chicago today:

I want to thank President Obama for coming to Chicago today. He came with a good diagnosis, but prescribed the wrong treatment.

There's no doubt that we must find ways to expand access to affordable health care to the uninsured. But his plans won't improve our nation's healthcare system. They will only put more patients at risk of not getting the treatment they need.

He is not in favor of caps on damages and yet offered no solution to the broken medical liability system. He did not address the inability of patients and physicians to privately contract for medical care without the onerous penalties present in the current Medicare system. He made no mention of proven market successes such as Health Savings Accounts. Nor of market enhancements including tax credits and more.

Patients come to the U.S. from all over the world because we have the best healthcare system. We are leaders in surgical care, pharmaceutical research, and device innovation. And this didn't happen by accident. It happened because patients and professionals worked together to ensure that patients have the care they need. And the private sector healthcare industry made sure that scientists and researchers were given the tools necessary for new discovery.

But in countries all around the world with government-controlled healthcare systems, patients are told - by their government - what treatments they can and cannot have. Medical decisions are being taken out of the doctor's office and put into a bureaucrat's office. We cannot allow that to happen here.

More than 80 percent of Americans currently have health insurance, and the vast majority of them are overwhelmingly satisfied with their coverage, so let's fix the problem we have - not one that doesn't exist. We can do that by expanding insurance coverage through tax credits, consumer choice, and subsidies to the poor to help them pay for insurance.

We can improve the system we have by providing more affordable access to healthcare for more Americans, but it would be a serious mistake to give more government-control of the medical system that would only result in diminished quality of care, waiting lines for doctors' visits, and an end to medical discovery. Let's keep the patient in control with the physician as trusted advisor and the government out of the doctors' office.

### **About the Coalition to Protect Patients' Rights**

The Coalition to Protect Patients' Rights is a grassroots coalition made up of patients, healthcare providers, advocacy groups, and engaged citizens who are concerned about the current healthcare debate and who want to ensure that patients continue to have the

medical treatments they need.

For more information, visit the Coalition to Protect Patients' Rights website at [www.protectpatientsrights.org](http://www.protectpatientsrights.org).

**Contacts**

**Coalition to Protect Patients' Rights**

1-877-729-0122

[media@protectpatientsrights.org](mailto:media@protectpatientsrights.org)

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