



Spotlight On Justice



A WORD FROM AN INSURANCE INDUSTRY LOBBYIST . . .

Frank Cornelius, former lobbyist with the Insurance Institute of Indiana, wrote a *New York Times* column called “Crushed by My Own Reform,” in October, 1994:

“In 1989, I underwent routine arthroscopic surgery after injuring my left knee in a fall.” As a result of a series of catastrophic incidents of malpractice, Cornelius continued, “I am confined to a wheelchair and need a respirator to keep breathing. I have not been able to work. I have continuous physical pain in my legs and feet... Twice, I have received last rites from my church. My marriage is ending, and the emotional fallout on our five children has been difficult to witness, to say the least. At the age of 49, I am told that I have less than two years to live.

“In 1975, I helped persuade the Indiana Legislature to pass what was acclaimed as a pioneering reform of the medical malpractice laws: a \$ 500,000 cap on damage awards, and elimination of all damages for pain and suffering. I argued successfully that such limits would reduce health-care costs and encourage physicians to stay in Indiana - the same sort of arguments that now underpin the medical industry's call for national malpractice reform.

“Today, from my wheelchair, I rue that accomplishment.”

Frank Cornelius has since passed away.

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