



PENNSYLVANIA
OSTEOPATHIC
MEDICAL
ASSOCIATION

717-939-9318
1330 Eisenhower Boulevard
Harrisburg, PA 17111
Email: poma@poma.org

NEWS

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 25, 2022

CONTACT: Andy Sandusky
717-727-3668

PENNSYLVANIA OSTEOPATHIC MEDICAL ASSOCIATION REACTS TO SUPREME COURT ACTION ON VENUE SHOPPING

Harrisburg, PA, Thursday, August 25, 2022 – The Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association reacts to the Commonwealth Supreme Court decision to rescind the venue rule keeping medical liability actions within the county in which the event was alleged to take place.

“The cost of liability insurance for physicians will likely increase,” said Lisa Witherite-Rieg, DO, POMA President, “which will decrease patient access to care provided by osteopathic physicians. The court seems to have forgotten the lessons learned in the early 2000s when premiums for coverage represented a substantial investment by physicians required by law in order to practice their profession. Because professional liability insurance is required by law, physicians will find themselves at the mercy of a market they cannot control. Further, the Commonwealth will again be viewed as being hostile to the medical profession.”

The court and the General Assembly made a change in 2003 bringing rational reform to bear in correcting an imbalance in the medical professional liability insurance market which ended venue shopping by requiring the alleged action to be initiated in the county where it took place. It worked. This is a significant setback for the profession.

POMA, in collaboration with other state physician organizations, will continue to pursue legislation that will amend the Constitution to permanently stop venue shopping.

About the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association

Founded in 1903, the Pennsylvania Osteopathic Medical Association promotes public health through maintaining high standards of osteopathic continuing medical education; stimulating research, investigation and dissemination of such knowledge; and advocates for the osteopathic profession in the Commonwealth. POMA represents more than 10,800 osteopathic physicians, residents and medical students in Pennsylvania and is headquartered in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania.

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