

While I was visiting a neurosurgeon's office in the recent past, he took the occasion to show me all the medical charts he was reviewing for medical negligence. As I gazed upon the many stacks of medical records, he asked me why there were so many medical malpractice lawsuits. When I replied I was not altogether sure, he said because there was so much medical malpractice.

As our Congress and country debate much needed and necessary health care overhaul opponents have focused on tort reform. As recently pointed out in the **Philadelphia Inquirer**, blaming innocent victims and the attorneys that represent them is merely a distraction. 98,000 American men, women and children die each year from medical malpractice in a health care delivery system that is broken.

Anthony Tarricone, president of the [American Association for Justice](#), states, "Serious times call for serious solutions. The focus should be on reducing the frequency of medical errors, a real epidemic that is plaguing our health-care system. Health reform is desperately needed, and its opponents should not be allowed to use the legal rights of injured patients as a bargaining chip."