

I SIGNED THE PHYSICIANS' DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE – WILL YOU?

By Elizabeth Lee Vliet, M.D. © July 28, 2009

I declared “independence” from the tyranny of insurance companies in 1986, one year after leaving a medical school faculty position to open my own practice. When it became legal to do so, I “opted out” of Medicare. I did it because I could not in good conscience continue to watch patients suffer because some bureaucrat denied care that the patient and I thought she needed.

Medical treatment decisions, rightfully and fully, belong with the patient and their physician and family, not some faceless clerk who has no medical training and has never even seen the human being in question. As an independent physician, I have no “contracts” with any outside entity. My *only* “contract” is *with my patients*. I am able to make the decisions that my patients and I *together* decide are medically in their best interest.

In the 1980s, physicians abdicated much of their power and decision-making to insurance company bureaucratic decision-makers as “managed care” directed and controlled payments for allowed treatment options. Now in 2009, we have new threats from our own government in the proposed massive takeover of health care under the guise of “reform.” But the actual House Healthcare Bill 3200 provides for your medical records to be sent without your permission to the federal health “czar,” for required end of life counseling beginning at age 65 and increasing in frequency the older and sicker you become, and requires use of “comparative effectiveness research” to decide your treatment options based on age and your value to society.

Oh, and did I mention, that the Congressional Budget Office estimates that his “reform” will cost taxpayers another 1 TRILLION to 1.6 TRILLION dollars...and also insure non-tax-paying illegal immigrants? Yes, all of this really IS in the actual bill...but legislators are not even reading the bill!

Let's be clear. House bill 3200 is *not* reform – it is about control. Control of how, when, and with whom you get medical care. Control of your very freedom to live.

The art and professionalism and ethics of medicine are under attack and we are at a crossroads. It is long past time for physicians to stand up to the tyranny that is affecting our decisions for patients, and affecting patients' treatment options and yes, even their lives.

Last week, I announced that I resigned from the AMA as a protest of their support for government run health care “reform” that violates our physician code of ethics and our Hippocratic oath in several key ways that most patients don’t yet know:

- (1) The 2009 “stimulus” bill violated patient’s privacy – it requires doctors to send your full electronic medical records *without your permission* to the federal “health czar”
- (2) The 2009 “stimulus” bill requires *comparative effectiveness research* (code for limiting care based on age and your “value” to society) to be used to determine whether you are able to have a particular treatment, e.g. hip or knee replacement, angioplasty, back surgery, hospital re-admission.
- (3) House Bill 3200 requires everyone over age 65 having government-provided medical care to have federal workers “counsel” you about end of life plans, such as going into hospice. The sicker you are, the more often these counseling sessions are required. (pg 425-446)
- (4) House Bill 3200 requires doctors to follow government “guidelines” – soon to be “dictums”- for your care
- (5) House Bill 3200 effectively eliminates your private insurance options

But even these steps are not enough as I read the draconian provisions for top-down, punishment-based, government control of our bodies, our choices, and even our right to continue living as outlined in House Bill 3200.

My next step has been to sign *The Physicians’ Declaration of Independence*. This document is a project of the Association of American Physicians and Surgeons (AAPS), the group that has been the voice for private physicians and patients since 1943. AAPS is a non-partisan professional association of physicians in all types of practices and specialties across the country dedicated to the highest ethical standards of the Oath of Hippocrates and to preserving the sanctity of the patient-physician relationship and the practice of private medicine.

AAPS motto says it all: “Omnia Pro Aegroto” means “all for the patient.” This is the group that actively worked to prevent the *HillaryCare* takeover of our health system, and has now spearheaded the campaign to “Take Back Medicine.”

There are many good ideas to protect patients rights, preserve choices and control costs– but the House leadership is ramming through this massively expensive bill without even allowing the minority party ideas and amendments to see the light of day – I protest these underhanded tactics to pass a bill that its own supporters are *not even reading!*

Yet, in public statements, leadership in Washington is giving the public platitudes and false assurances that directly contradict what is actually in the bill. This is one piece of legislation YOU better take time to read. It is available on-line at www.PatientsUnitedNow.com. If you have not yet read it, you *must* do so. It is shocking and eye-opening. This is your life, your choices, your liberty, and your health freedom at stake.

As a protest to the unconscionable tactics being used to keep the truth from the public, and to block Republican amendments from being considered in the House:

- ❑ I challenge other doctors to do as I did: resign from the AMA in protest of AMA support of government intrusion and regulation of the physician-patient relationship.
- ❑ I challenge patients across the country to write letters and protest the AMA's blatant disregard for AMA's own stated goals: "to combat third party interference with physician/patient relationship."
- ❑ I challenge patients to seek out doctors who fight to maintain the sanctity of the physician-patient relationship.
- ❑ If *you* value your health care freedom and do not want government running your choices, consider boycotting doctors who remain members of the AMA
- ❑ I challenge patients to ask doctors to sign the AAPS Physicians' Declaration of Independence.
- ❑ I ask patients to sign the petition: Take Back Medicine!

My first American ancestor arrived at Jamestown in 1608. He came from England to escape tyranny and seek a life of freedom. My ancestors fought in the American Revolution against tyranny and taxation without representation. My ancestors later fought to preserve states' rights. My Quaker ancestors in Virginia, at the risk of being jailed, spoke out to abolish slavery. These cherished American ideals for life and liberty are in my DNA.

It is now *my turn* to fight the 21st century tyranny of government ownership of our health choices. It is my turn to help save our freedom to live our lives until our Creator calls us home. It is not for the government to say, "You cost too much. Die and get out of the way." That is NOT the America my ancestors came to these shores to build. I cannot sit back and watch their efforts go in vain.

I have signed the Physician's Declaration of Independence.

Will YOU stand up and be counted, and have the courage to help preserve an independent physician-patient relationship?

Will YOU – as patients and as physicians –help us Take Back Medicine to put it into the hands of patients and their doctors?

Physician's Declaration of Independence:

<http://www.aapsonline.org/medicare/doi.htm>

Take Back Medicine Petition: <http://www.takebackmedicine.com/petition>

For additional information, see "Public Deception" on www.PatientsUnitedNow.com

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