



Fierce Debate on Medical Malpractice Cap

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Victims of the hepatitis C scandal are speaking out and urging lawmakers to remove the current limit on how much a patient is awarded in a medical malpractice case.

But doctors say if that cap is gone, healthcare is thrown out the window.

With signs in hand, doctors and nurses lined up outside of the Grant Sawyer Building, showing their opposition to Assembly Bill 495.

"It's just a bad bill at a really bad time," said Dr. John Nowins.

Dr. Nowins is strongly against AB 495, which if passed would remove a \$350,000 cap on medical malpractice judgments, "There is no reason to fix it now. There is an economic crisis. We don't need a healthcare crisis."

Doctors worry liability insurance will skyrocket, pushing Nevada doctors out of town, which is what happened several years ago when medical premiums were at a high.

But on the opposite side of this argument sit dozens of patients whose lives have drastically changed after being infected with hepatitis C due to bad injection practices.

Patients who contracted hepatitis C from the Endoscopy Clinic of Southern Nevada say a \$350,000 cap protects bad doctors. It's the patients who have to live with the illness for the rest of their lives.

"After receiving this infection, everything went out of control. My eyesight -- I've had to have two surgeries on my eyes," said Michael Washington.

Patients like Washington spoke before lawmakers, explaining a life filled with doctor appointments and surgeries, a life that changed at the hands of a bad doctor. Washington and his attorney say those doctors need to be held accountable.

"The good doctors have nothing to worry about. The Dr. Desai's, the Dr. Bass', who is prison for murder, these doctors, we want them to leave. Goodbye," said attorney Ed Bernstein.

It's a touchy topic that has both sides fighting hard for what they believe, but it's up to lawmakers to decide for themselves. Lawmakers will consider the testimony from the legislative hearing before deciding if this proposed bill will move forward.