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Senators Unveil Unconstitutional Assault on Patients' Rights **SB 141: Obliterating Georgians' Constitutional Right to a Trial by Jury**

ATLANTA, GA – Legislation was introduced in the Georgia State Senate on Friday that seeks to dismantle Georgia patients' constitutional guarantee of the right to a trial by jury. Senate Bill 141¹, also known as the 'Patient Injury Act,' would strip Georgians of their ability to seek justice in the courtroom, and instead replace our time-tested judicial system with a bureaucratic government agency, one that would be manned by biased healthcare providers sitting in judgment of their colleagues.

"Senate Bill 141 is an unconstitutional assault on Georgia's patients," remarked Georgia Trial Lawyers Association President Jay Sadd. **"Our Constitution guarantees the inviolate right to hold one's wrongdoers accountable before a jury of peers, and this legislation obliterates that promise.**

"In replacing the judge and jury with a bureaucratic governmental agency, Senate Bill 141 encroaches upon centuries of legal precedence and eliminates all procedural safeguards, accountability mechanisms and meaningful appeals processes currently guaranteed in our legal system. Georgians must stand for our constitutional rights and reject this proposal outright."

Former Georgia Attorney General Mike Bowers, in a legal opinion prepared for the Medical Association of Georgia, explained why the proposal is unconstitutional, and concluded by saying that, **"It is about as certain as we can get in law that the [bill] would be held unconstitutional if challenged, as a violation of Georgia's constitutional right to trial by jury."**

In conclusion, Sadd remarked, **"Nearly 100,000 Americans are killed every year by medical negligence². Many of those victims of medical malpractice are Georgia patients. Locking the courthouse doors to our patients and replacing juries with the fox guarding the henhouse will not serve the best interests of any Georgia citizens."**

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¹ <http://www.legis.ga.gov/legislation/en-US/Display/20132014/SB/141>

² <http://www.iom.edu/~media/Files/Report%20Files/1999/To-Err-is-Human/To%20Err%20is%20Human%201999%20%20report%20brief.pdf>