

**National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws**  
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**For Immediate Release:**

**ABA APPROVES NEW UNIFORM EMERGENCY VOLUNTEER HEALTHCARE  
PRACTITIONERS ACT ALLOWING OUT-OF-STATE MEDICAL PROFESSIONALS TO  
CROSS STATE LINES IN DECLARED EMERGENCIES**

*Drafted by NCCUSL in Response to Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, Act Cuts Red Tape and Increases  
Timely Delivery of Healthcare Services*

August 9, 2006 – The **Uniform Emergency Volunteer Healthcare Practitioners Act** (UEVHPA), which was drafted in response to the inability of many medical professionals to aid victims of Hurricanes Katrina and Rita because they were not licensed to practice in the Gulf Coast states, was unanimously approved Tuesday by the American Bar Association's House of Delegates at its Annual Meeting in Hawaii and paves the way for states across the country to adopt the measure.

The new uniform law, drafted and approved over the course of the last six months by the National Conference of Commissioners on Uniform State Laws (NCCUSL), will allow state governments to give reciprocity to other state's licensees on emergency services providers during a declared disaster. The ABA resolution endorsing the UEVHPA was co-sponsored by the ABA Health Law Section, the ABA Tort Trial and Insurance Practice Section, and the ABA State and Local Government Law Section.

The hurricanes that swept through the Gulf region last fall brought to light significant shortcomings in the ability of our nation's disaster relief capacity. Many qualified physicians, nurses and other medical professionals from other states faced confusing administrative hurdles in obtaining permission to practice in the affected areas that delayed and impeded the timely delivery of essential health care services.

NCCUSL moved to draft the UEVHPA to fill this tragic gap so that healthcare practitioners can be more quickly and effectively deployed to health care facilities and disaster relief organizations.

"We are extremely gratified that the ABA recognized the importance of this new uniform act for addressing the healthcare needs of disaster victims as seamlessly as possible, and that it joined with us to approve the measure with a speed unprecedented in the national legal community," said Howard J. Swibel, President of NCCUSL. "The ABA's decisive action is a huge vote of confidence for the Act as it now moves to the state legislatures, where we hope and expect that it will be quickly adopted. UEVHPA has the potential to save untold numbers of lives in the wake of future disasters."

UEVHPA establishes a system whereby healthcare practitioners may register to provide volunteer services either before or during an emergency. It further authorizes healthcare facilities and disaster relief organizations in affected states or territories to use registered professionals and to rely on the registration systems to confirm that these professionals are appropriately licensed.

The new UEVHPA includes specific statutory guidelines on the following: language making it clear when provisions of the act take effect, such as during officially-declared states of emergency; requirements for a volunteer healthcare practitioner registration system; language restricting its application to medical professionals holding a valid and current license in another state who are not subject to disciplinary proceedings.

The Uniform Emergency Volunteer Healthcare Practitioners Act is now available for introduction and adoption by all the states. A copy of the act can be found at NCCUSL's website at [www.nccusl.org](http://www.nccusl.org).

*NCCUSL, now in its 115<sup>th</sup> year, comprises more than 350 practicing lawyers, governmental lawyers, judges, law professors and lawyer-legislators, from every state, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Commissioners are appointed by their states to draft and promote enactment of uniform laws that are designed to solve problems common to all the state.*

*After receiving NCCUSL's seal of approval, a uniform act is officially promulgated for consideration by the states, and legislatures are urged to adopt it. Since its inception in 1892, NCCUSL has been responsible for more than 200 acts, among them such bulwarks of state statutory law as the Uniform Commercial Code, the Uniform Probate Code, and the Uniform Partnership Act.*

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