

**PRESS RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## Advocate, MD Takes Advantage of the Success of Tort Reform, Purchases Mississippi Medical Malpractice Availability Plan

*Austin, Texas-based company becomes a fully admitted and state regulated medical malpractice insurance carrier in Mississippi faster than any other carrier*

AUSTIN, Texas, May 27, 2008 – Advocate, MD Insurance of the Southwest Inc. (Advocate, MD) takes advantage of Mississippi's tort reform success by becoming a fully admitted insurance carrier and acquiring Mississippi's Medical Malpractice Availability Plan (MMAP) with \$25 million in assets.

The Mississippi Insurance Department recently expedited the application process and licensed Advocate, MD as a fully admitted medical liability insurance carrier. "This move is seen as a step toward alleviating the critical shortage of experienced doctors and specialists within the state of Mississippi," said Dr. Randy Easterling, Chairman of the Mississippi Medical Association.

Prior to tort reform, many physicians had ceased practicing in the state or discontinued high-risk procedures due to a largely unregulated legal climate in which multimillion-dollar lawsuit rewards had driven malpractice insurance rates up to unaffordable levels. A fully admitted and state regulated insurance provider, such as Advocate, MD will offer physicians another choice of insurance carriers, services, and premiums.

As a result of tort reform, the Mississippi Legislature created the Mississippi Medical Malpractice Availability Plan (MMAP) in 2003, which is available to most Mississippi-licensed healthcare providers and facilities. When the legislature passed the bill creating MMAP, it was intentionally designed to be a 5-year temporary plan. The benefits of tort reform have allowed the state of Mississippi to successfully exit the medical liability business.

Advocate, MD acquired MMAP as a launch pad for entering the Mississippi standard market. The company gained \$25 million in assets by succeeding in a state orchestrated competitive bidding process against two other national carriers, and became one of the largest medical liability insurance providers in Mississippi with the MMAP acquisition.

Advocate, MD intends to grow its market share in Mississippi by offering competitive rates and quality service to all physicians. That is an important step toward enticing more talented physicians to practice in Mississippi, and will enhance patients' access to healthcare and their choice of medical specialists.

"We are excited about expanding our business into Mississippi as it is a natural fit for us and is another step toward our national expansion goals," said Advocate, MD President and Chief Executive Officer Mark Adams. "We are the doctor's advocate and we take pride in protecting and serving our physicians. We have a reputation of offering competitive rates, outstanding service, creative risk management programs and aggressive claims management services. We feel confident that we can draw more doctors and specialists back to Mississippi."

### **About Advocate, MD,**

Headquartered in Austin, Texas, Advocate, MD ([www.advocatemd.com](http://www.advocatemd.com)) is a multi-state licensed and regulated, capital stock medical liability carrier. As a licensed, admitted insurance carrier, Advocate, MD adheres to the Department of Insurance guidelines and is regulated by each state. Advocate, MD offers risk management services, claims-made and continuous policies, retroactive and tail coverage, and medical board defense to physicians in all medical specialties, individually and in groups in all counties.