

# Joining the Debate

Because we at *Cataract & Refractive Surgery Today* strive to address the cutting edge of cataract and refractive surgery, it is only fitting that we kick off 2010 with coverage of the national debate on health care. At press time, the Senate had reached a compromise on HR 3590, the "Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act," after Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D, Nevada) unveiled his manager's amendment on December 19, 2009. The final vote on the legislation that has the potential to dramatically affect the delivery of medical care in this country is expected on Christmas Eve day.

Because the topic of health care reform is complex, we focused our attention on the aspects of major interest to our readers. The cover series begins with a time line and overview of the current efforts toward health care reform in the United States. Next, we asked five ophthalmologists from different parts of the country to identify the reforms they feel will work here. The range of ideas they present is intriguing.

*CRSToday's* series would be woefully incomplete if it failed to address tort reform, a major concern of ophthalmic surgeons. We asked members of a Missouri-based practice to provide an in-depth look at their experience with tort reform and to suggest how changes in their state may relate to national reform. A companion

to the article is a sidebar on defensive medicine.

Also in this issue is a comprehensive point/counterpoint on health care legislation. Roger Steinert, MD, and Priscilla Arnold, MD, members of ASCRS' Executive Committee, explain why the organization backed HR 3962 and 3961. In his rebuttal, John Doane, MD, asserts that medical organizations should push to remove limiting charges across the board. *CRSToday* also takes a look at the Canadian health care system, against which the US system is often compared. To round out the series, Paul Koch, MD, offers his insight into maximizing efficiency in the ASC—a crucial step in an environment of lower reimbursements.

In addition to this timely discussion of US health care, this month's edition of *CRSToday* contains an article on improving phacoemulsification in which multiple surgeons share a variety of pearls complete with video illustrations available at [Eyetube.net](http://Eyetube.net). No matter what shape health care reform takes in the United States, all of us

at *CRSToday* wish our readers a healthy and happy 2010. ■



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