

Breaking News

Barrett Loses Appeal, Leaves Town Fight Back, Join the Foundation for Health Choice

Self proclaimed Quackbuster, Stephen Barrett, MD, recently handed crushing defeats by chiropractor Tedd Koren and Ilena Rosenthal, has announced he is leaving his home town and operating base in Allentown, Pennsylvania.

On June 11th, 2007, the Superior Court of Pennsylvania affirmed a lower court dismissal of Barrett's defamation suite against Dr. Koren. Barrett's case was so lacking in merit the judge blocked it from going to the jury. Barrett simply had no case against Dr. Koren. This followed another stunning defeat last month in California. There an appeals court ordered Barrett and crony Terry Polevoy, MD to post bonds of more than \$400,000.00 after they lost a defamation case against Illena Rosenthal virtually identical to the Koren case.

Perhaps the fact that lawyers and judges in Allentown are catching on to his intimidation schemes explains why Barrett is moving to Chapel Hill, North Carolina. Barrett can run but he can't hide. Chapel Hill collection attorneys are already being asked to locate his assets to pay his unmet legal obligations. Assets of other Quackwatch, Inc., principals might also be sought.

Who Is Steven Barrett, What Are Quackbusters?

Steven Barrett is an unlicensed Pennsylvania psychiatrist, who, though he failed his psychiatric boards and has been criticized for his lack of expertise by several courts, still claims to often advise the Federal Trade Commission (FTC), the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), the FBI, State Attorneys General, HMOs, Consumer Reports, medical journals and state medical, chiropractic and dental boards.

The insurance industry cites Barrett's highly opinionated "Quackbuster" attacks to deny paying claims for chiropractic and other natural healthcare. Barrett and the "Quackbusters," a vigilante group of self proclaimed skeptics of any medical or health modality that avoids drugs, surgery or radiation, attack almost all non-conventional healthcare practices as quackery. Ignoring all scientific research to the contrary, they dismiss Gulf War Syndrome, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, Chemical Sensitivity, Chronic Fatigue Syndrome, and dietary supplements as rubbish. Double Nobel Prize winner Linus Pauling is on their "quack" hit list along with many well known and respected doctors and scientists, including Deepak Chopra, Andrew Weil, and dozens of others.

Barrett claims to give over 500 interviews a year to newspapers,

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[Who are we?](#)

[Mandatory
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magazines, and television shows, including CNN and the Today Show. He claims to have been a peer reviewer for seven medical journals, including the Journal of the American Medical Association, even though he had no license to practice medicine when he did the reviewing.

The Quackbusters run over 70 websites. Millions of people go to them every year. Look up chiropractic, acupuncture, homeopathy or even vitamin C, as well as almost every other natural health topic, on the Internet and you (and the public) will be led to Quackbuster sites advising you of natural health “dangers.” In all these forums Barrett and the Quackbusters relentlessly attack the consumer right to informed choice. These activities continue the AMA’s anti-quackery committee’s activities that were struck down by federal courts as an illegal restraint of trade in a landmark lawsuit brought by Illinois chiropractor Chester Wilk. They also help insurance companies deny consumer reimbursement claims.

At the same time, Barrett flacks for products like aspartame (NutraSweet), which is the subject of tens of thousands of consumer complaints. Question (asked on Barrett’s web site): “An email message is being circulated with many statements to the effect that aspartame is dangerous. How worried should I be?” Answer (from Barrett): “Not at all. The message is pure rubbish.”

What Did Dr. Koren Do to Provoke Barrett’s Shakedown?

Dr. Tedd Koren is a well-known chiropractor, researcher, writer and lecturer. Barrett sued Dr. Koren in 2003 for calling him a Quackpot, saying he was in big trouble because of a racketeering law suit brought against him and attacking his lack of a medical license in his internet newsletter.

The trial judge and three appeals judges agreed unanimously that these statements were so far from defamation that no jury could be legally allowed to call them defamation. Dr. Koren also said Barrett was “delicensed.” One of the three appeals courts judges thought a jury might be able to find this to be defamation. However two appellate judges disagreed and jurors interviewed after the trial said they too saw through Barrett and felt that he was a litigious, ungrounded and biased denier of the truth.

In part jurors formed this view because Barrett testified with great self-satisfaction in the Koren case that he had sued many doctors—close to forty—in similar cases, demanding up to \$100,000 if they wished to avoid a costly lawsuit. Some paid—how many is yet to be discovered. Drs. Koren and Rosenthal and a few others did not. Barrett has failed to win a single lawsuit in this shakedown scheme.

Dr. Koren’s Legal Team

Well known consumer advocate, James S. (Jim) Turner, general counsel to Koren Publications, who several years earlier had persuaded the FTC to drop an investigation against Dr. Koren (brought at a time when Barrett was a consultant to the FTC),

organized and coordinated the legal team that represented Dr. Koren. Attorney Christopher Reid of Allentown, Pennsylvania acted as associate trial counsel and appellate counsel and California health freedom attorney Carlos Negrete acted as trial counsel.,

Mr. Negrete said, "Fortunately for all of his colleagues, Dr. Koren decided not to back down and took the case to trial. Barrett is part of a group of intolerant individuals. I am not certain who the supporters of the so-called Quackbusters are, but they seem to me to be just skinheads with stethoscopes."

During heated and often dramatic courtroom proceedings, Mr. Negrete pointed out many of the questionable statements Barrett includes on his websites attacking chiropractic, as well as facts about Barrett's own credentials that shocked even his supporters.

Mr. Turner says, "It is very important that a very responsible judge in Barrett's hometown recognized that he was making false allegations and dismissed the case. Barrett has cost untoward numbers of consumers pain, anguish and probably serious harm by his misrepresentation of the facts about subjects ranging from acupuncture to zinc."

Mr. Turner, who among other campaigns led the team that got acupuncture needles approved as safe by FDA, worked with a Senate committee to abolish the dysfunctional vaccine regulatory agency, worked with whistleblowers to stop the Swine Flu inoculation campaign, kept aspartame off the market for ten years, and played a key role in lobbying the Organic Food Production Act through Congress (all areas on which the Foundation for Health Choice focuses), says, "Our objective is to end Barrett's abuse of consumers by eliminating the false and misleading information from his website and his entire network of websites and replacing it with sound, useful information for consumers."

Says Dr. Koren, "This is just the beginning. Just as the FTC battle was not about Tedd Koren alone but had ramifications for the entire chiropractic and natural health professions so the Barrett v. Koren battle will have major ramifications for all. We're going to give the Quackbusters a taste of their own medicine. They'll learn how dangerous medicine can be."

"Our mission is not just about revealing the Quackbusters to be the unscientific bigots that they are. We are fighting for health care freedom. One of our goals is to permit parents to make sound decisions about vaccination for their children. There are too many sound health reasons for certain children to avoid vaccination and the government has recognized too many vaccine caused deaths and maimings (over \$1.5 billion of compensation has been paid to bereaved families by the federal vaccine injury compensation system since 1988) to allow a non-vaccinated child to be refused day care, school, college, or employment," says Dr. Koren.

Mr. Turner is also lead counsel in a case brought against Barrett by

Dr. Don Harrison, the chiropractor who founded and leads
Chiropractic Biophysics.

Join The Foundation for Health Choice Free, Make a Contribution

Dr. Koren, Jim Turner and others have formed The Foundation for
Health Choice to fight for health care freedom.

The Foundation for Health Choice has a comprehensive multi-phase
strategy to advance consumer access to the wide variety of health
and wellness initiatives available to consumers that do not involve
drugs, surgery or radiation, including:

Providing access to information currently resisted by the established
medical system,

Investigating and reporting on activities and organizations that
undermine chiropractic, naturopathic, homeopathic, acupuncture
and other non dug based approaches to health and well being,

Working to eliminate concealment of evidence of such modalities'
usefulness, the undercutting of insurance programs for patients, and
the subverting of government inquiries by special interests,

And numerous other activities to eliminate the monopoly over health
care that currently exists in this country.

Says Dr. Koren, "The Foundation needs members and donors,
especially monthly donors, to sustain its activities. Ten dollars a
month from enough people can make a big difference. Please go to
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