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## ACCEPTED MANUSCRIPT

## Damage Caps and Defensive Medicine, Revisited

Myungho Paik, Bernard Black, and David Hyman\*

#### **Abstract**

Does tort reform reduce defensive medicine and thus healthcare spending? Several (though not all) prior studies, using a difference-in-differences (DiD) approach, find lower Medicare spending for hospital care after states adopt caps on non-economic or total damages ("damage caps"), during the "second" reform wave of the mid-1980s. We re-examine this issue in several ways. We study the nine states that adopted caps during the "third reform wave," from 2002-2005. We find that damage caps have no significant impact on Medicare Part A spending, but predict roughly 4% *higher* Medicare Part B spending. We then revisit the 1980s caps, and find no evidence of a post-adoption drop (or rise) in spending for these caps.

The Online Appendix can be downloaded without charge from SSRN at <a href="http://ssrn.com/abstract=2830255">http://ssrn.com/abstract=2830255</a>

JEL Classifications: I11, I18, K23, K32

Keywords: medical malpractice, tort reform, defensive medicine, Medicare,

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