

## **Texas Medical Board**

### **Press Release**

#### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Monday, November 6, 2006**

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### **Medical Board Reaffirms License Suspension of Robert J. Byrnes, D.O., of Palestine**

A panel of the Texas Medical Board on Friday reaffirmed an earlier panel's decision to suspend the license of Robert J. Byrnes, D.O., license number J1904, after determining that Dr. Byrnes' continuation in the practice of medicine presents a continuing threat to the public welfare.

A temporary suspension hearing had been held without notice on Friday, October 6, under the Board's authority, granted by S.B. 104 of the 78th Legislature, to suspend or restrict a physician's license without notice when it determines the physician's continuation in practice would constitute a continuing threat to the public welfare. That panel suspended Dr. Byrnes' license. On Friday, the Board held a hearing with notice to Dr. Byrnes, who did not appear at the hearing, nor was he represented by counsel.

The action was based on the following: Dr. Byrnes was arrested for making terroristic threats toward his wife; he was indicted in Anderson County for insurance fraud; he was arrested in Anderson County for criminal failure to pay child support; he had a positive test for amphetamines; his DPS renewal was denied and he surrendered his DEA registration; he was arrested and indicted for issuing a prescription for a controlled substance without proper registration; his car was searched by the Palestine Police Department, which found controlled substances and other drugs and a triplicate prescription pad in another doctor's name; and other findings for which the panel found an imminent peril to the public health, safety or welfare that requires immediate effect of the order of temporary suspension.

The length of a temporary suspension is indefinite and remains in effect until the board takes further action.

The Texas Medical Board, the state agency that regulates physicians, physician assistants, surgical assistants and acupuncturists, provides consumer protection through licensure, investigation and disciplinary action. The Board, under President Roberta M. Kalafut, D.O., and Executive Director Donald W. Patrick, M.D., J.D., and mandated by Senate Bill 104 of the 78th Legislature and S.B. 419 of the 79th Legislature, is strengthening and accelerating the disciplinary process for licensees who fail to meet the required standards of professional proficiency and behavior. Information on filing a complaint is on the agency web site at [www.tsbme.state.tx.us](http://www.tsbme.state.tx.us) or by calling (800) 201-9353.