To the Editor:

Re "Give Doctors Tougher Rules" (Op-Ed, Dec. 10), by Dr. Joseph R. Wilder: Most serious medical mistakes relate to inadvertent medication errors, which can best be handled on a hospital-by-hospital basis, using computerized safeguards and guidelines. Oversight by medical governing bodies would have the counterproductive effect of encouraging doctors (and other caregivers) to hide, rather than learn from, their mistakes: plaintiffs' lawyers lurk in every corner.

And if Dr. Wilder's stringent surgical safeguards were widely applied, patients would be waiting months for elective surgery--and how would the next generation of surgeons be trained?