

# Abortion doctor won't work in Jersey,

The Associated Press

TRENTON, N.J. — A doctor who sometimes performs abortions in Florida said an agreement for him to stop practicing in New Jersey at least gives him the chance to clear his name.

The New Jersey State Board of Medical Examiners on Wednesday accepted Dr. Steven Chase Brigham's offer to stop working in the state pending an administrative law judge's decision as to

his fitness to practice medicine.

"At least I get the opportunity to defend myself. That's the most important thing," Brigham said after the board's decision. "The charges are unfair and unfounded, [but] I see the light at the end of the tunnel."

Brigham had his medical license revoked in New York three weeks ago, and before that he had agreed to stop practicing medicine in Pennsylvania. With the action by the New Jersey board,

Brigham can practice only in California and Florida.

Brigham is charged with 14 counts of negligence, gross negligence, malpractice, and professional misconduct concerning five abortions performed in New Jersey and New York. Most of the cases involved complications arising during second-trimester abortions.

In Florida, Brigham took over for Dr. John Britton at the Ladies Center in Pensacola after Britton

was shot and killed outside the clinic. Paul Hill, a former minister, has been convicted and sentenced to die for killing Britton and his unarmed escort.

In October, an administrative law judge began hearings to determine whether Brigham's license to practice in New Jersey should be revoked or suspended.

That matter is ongoing, but the state on Wednesday asked New Jersey's medical board to revoke or suspend Brigham's license in

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## but will in Florida

light of the New York action.

Brigham offered to temporarily suspend his New Jersey practice pending a decision by the administrative law judge, and the board decided to accept his offer. The administrative law judge is set to reopen Brigham's case on Jan. 24.

New York last month revoked Brigham's privileges to practice there, citing two of the five abortions brought before the court in New Jersey.

One case involved a New Jersey woman, 26 weeks pregnant, who began bleeding during an abortion at Brigham's office in November 1993. New Jersey said that it was hours before Brigham called an ambulance to take her to a hospital, where she had to have a hysterectomy.

In a second case, Brigham was found by New York to have unknowingly perforated the uterus of a woman who was 24 weeks pregnant.

