Anesthesiologist Christopher Young has been practicing in Chattanooga, Tenn., for 22 years, with Anesthesiology Consultants Exchange (a group anesthesiology practice), and works at Erlanger Medical Center, which is a regional trauma center, children's center, and referral center for southeast Tennessee and northern Georgia. He is also president of the Tennessee Medical Association.

For you, what is the best part of practicing medicine in the state of Tennessee?
Well, I grew up in Tennessee. I think what I like about practicing in Tennessee is that it is a comfortable place to practice. We have a favorable cost of living compared to other parts of the country. I think there are several different types of practice opportunities for people to participate in — there's teaching opportunities, private-practice opportunities. The liability environment is improving through actions of the Tennessee Medical Association. In that way, I think there's a lot of opportunities in Tennessee.

What, if anything, would you change about the climate for physicians in Tennessee?
Well, I don't know if there is anything about Tennessee in particular that I'd like to change per se. I think we struggle like physicians in other parts of the country, with just all the changes occurring in medicine now. ... Tennessee tends to change slower than other parts [of the country], which sometimes is an advantage and sometimes a disadvantage. [Things are slower to change] in terms of payer markets, in terms of competition with payer markets. We do have a dominant payer, Blue Cross. But, I think most physicians look at Blue Cross as a good partner. In general they have a favorable view of Blue Cross, compared to other payers.

What advice would you give a young physician considering practicing in Tennessee?
I would tell him not to be discouraged. Everything is going to be OK. Doctors are going to be fine. There's a lot of change, but I think the practice of medicine has gone through changes before and things have always turned out OK.
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