

March 21, 2006

The Honorable Jim Nussle
Chairman
Committee on the Budget
309 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable John M. Spratt
Ranking Member
Committee on the Budget
B71 Cannon House Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Nussle and Ranking Member Spratt:

As the Committee prepares for consideration of the Fiscal Year 2007 budget resolution, we respectfully encourage you to include a budget reserve for health information technology (HIT) legislation reported out of the Ways and Means or Energy and Commerce Committees.

A September 2005 RAND Corporation report stated that HIT could save our nation as much as \$162 billion in annual medical costs¹ by reducing the 98,000 annual deaths due to preventable medical errors,² making complex cases more manageable, and allowing doctors to track lab tests, medications and treatments. The RAND report also stressed the important role the federal government can have in promoting the implementation and removing the current barriers to HIT.

We must transform our 20th century paper file system to catch up with 21st century medical care. The federal role may include reducing existing regulatory barriers, supporting the development of health information networks, and promoting the adoption of electronic medical records and other HIT by providers. Such legislative action would represent a modest investment in tools that will allow Medicaid, Medicare, and other federal health programs to become substantially more efficient, as well as to deliver better care. As such, we believe these investments in the future are worth special consideration in the budget resolution.

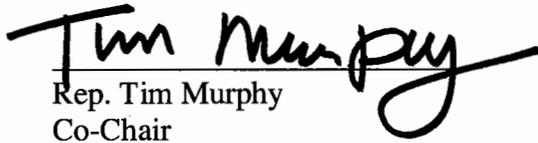
As you may be aware, S.Con. Res. 83 as reported from committee includes such a budget reserve, in section 302.

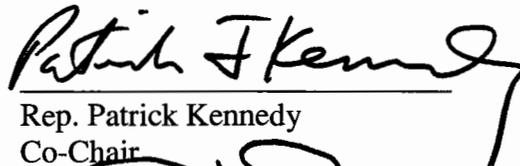
¹ Hillestad, Richard. Et. Al. Rand Corporation. Can Electronic Medical Record Systems Transform Health Care? Potential Health Benefits, Savings, And Costs. Health Affairs. September/October 2005.

² Institute of Medicine. To Err is Human. 1999.

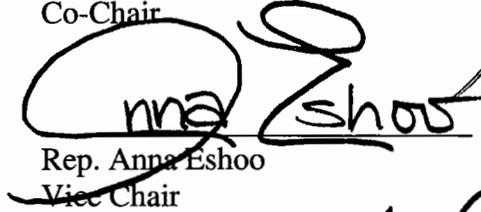
Thank you for your consideration of this request. We look forward to working with you to institute fundamental changes to bring our nation's health care delivery system into the 21st century.

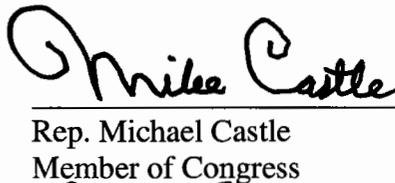
Sincerely,

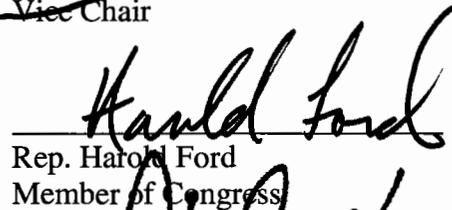

Rep. Tim Murphy
Co-Chair

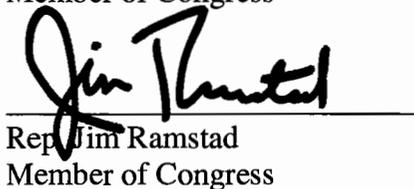

Rep. Patrick Kennedy
Co-Chair

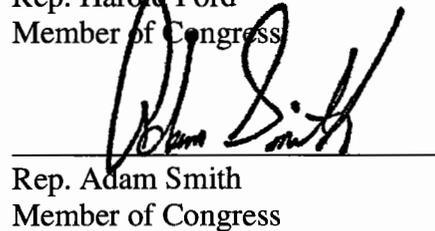

Rep. Charlie Norwood
Vice Chair

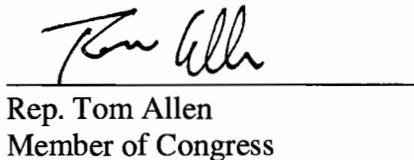

Rep. Anna Eshoo
Vice Chair

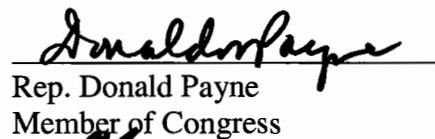

Rep. Michael Castle
Member of Congress

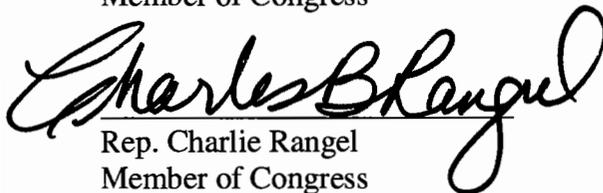

Rep. Harold Ford
Member of Congress

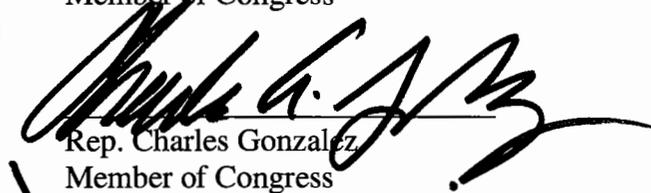

Rep. Jim Ramstad
Member of Congress

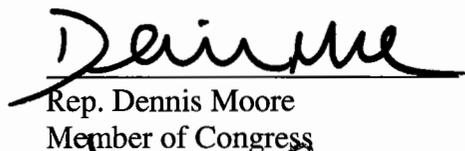

Rep. Adam Smith
Member of Congress

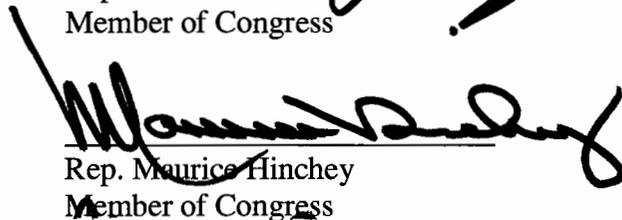

Rep. Tom Allen
Member of Congress

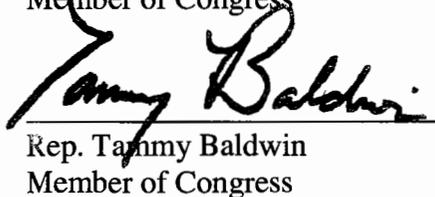

Rep. Donald Payne
Member of Congress


Rep. Charlie Rangel
Member of Congress


Rep. Charles Gonzalez
Member of Congress


Rep. Dennis Moore
Member of Congress


Rep. Maurice Hinchey
Member of Congress


Rep. Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress