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Health IT Coalition, Technology Executives, Members of Congress Urge Support of Health IT Legislation

*Health care and technology leaders urge passage this year to bring better health care,
greater convenience, and reining in spiraling health care costs*

WASHINGTON – Members of the Health IT Now! Coalition and the Information Technology Industry Council (ITI) called on Congress to pass health information technology (Health IT) legislation this year. This press conference was followed by a demonstration of cutting-edge health information technology showing how the implementation of health IT can revolutionize the benefits to patients, health care consumers, and health practitioners.

“We urge Congress to pass Health IT legislation this year,” said the Honorable Nancy Johnson, co-chair of the Health IT Now! Coalition. “The technology is ready but the law is not. Congress must act so doctors and patients can reap the benefits of this vital technology.”

Legislation is required to establish a federal foundation for a nationwide electronic system supporting patients and health care professionals. The network would replace paper-based records with a secure system that could prevent as many as 98,000 deaths each year and virtually eliminate most medical errors. Health IT would also create more convenient communication, and faster, more secure access to medical histories, test results and other critical information.

Representatives Anna Eshoo (D-Calif.) and Mike Rogers (R-Mich.), authors of HR 3800 to promote Health IT, are expected to release a letter urging the House Committee on Energy and Commerce to take up and approve their bill for consideration by the full House.

“Health Information Technology will help streamline medical recordkeeping and improve access to quality health care by reducing paperwork and making communication faster and more accurate,” Rogers said. “Our goal is to save lives by giving doctors and specialists easier and quicker access to lab and test results, ensuring that patient diagnosis and treatment can be given sooner and with more accuracy.”

The Health IT Now! Coalition urges Congress to pass legislation that will:

- Establish in statute federal responsibility to lead a public-private process to create standards for system interoperability, product certification, and quality measures and an accelerated process for standards improvement;
- Offer financial incentives to encourage the adoption of Health IT, and offer states, communities and other entities incentives to plan Health IT components and develop Health Information Exchanges;
- Provide federal focus on consumer empowerment through patient education about electronic health; and
- Establish federal leadership to resolve critical policy issues such as privacy and security as this life-saving system is being deployed.

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Health IT Now! unites patients, practitioners and employers, working together to take the steps to adopt Health IT now to dramatically improve quality of patient care, consumer convenience and patient health while lowering health care costs.

Visit www.healthITnow.org to learn more about the coalition, its principles and its membership. Members include:

*American Academy of Nursing
 The American Cancer Society
 Cancer Action Network
 The American Diabetes Association
 American Heart Association
 American Homeowners Grassroots Alliance
 The American Telemedicine Association
 The Boeing Company
 The Bronx Regional Health Information Organization
 Business Roundtable
 Consumers for Competitive Choice
 The Dow Chemical Company
 FasterCures
 Genetic Alliance
 International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers
 Latino Coalition
 Marshfield Clinic
 Montefiore Medical Center
 National Alliance for Caregiving
 National Alliance on Mental Illness
 National Association of Health Underwriters
 National Association of Manufacturers
 National Disease Clusters Alliance
 National Medical Association
 National MS Society*

*National Patient Advocate Foundation
National Retail Federation
Nortel Parkinson's Action Network
Research!America
RetireSafe
Seniors Coalition
Society for Human Resource Management
US Oncology Verizon
Whitman-Walker Clinic
Women Work!
World Institute on Disability*

HealthITNow.org is an organization that educates the public and policymakers on the challenges of our current health care system and the transforming life-saving and cost-saving benefits of health care information technology. As an organization formed within the meaning of section 501(c)(4), contributions to the organization are not tax deductible for federal income tax purposes.

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