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January 23, 2008

The Honorable Anna Eshoo  
205 Cannon HOB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representative Eshoo:

The American Association for Clinical Chemistry (AACC) endorses your legislation, H.R.3800, the "Wired for Health Care Quality Act," which proposes a variety of stimuli to create interactive electronic medical record (EMR) networks that can be used by health care providers to improve patient care. We believe the creation of such networks is vital to reducing medical errors and eliminating duplicative and unnecessary services, which, according to the Department of Health and Human Services, could save the health system \$140 billion per year.

Specifically, the measure would:

- codify the Office of National Coordinator for Information Technology;
- create a public-private partnership to develop interoperability standards;
- require all federal health information technology (HIT) purchases to conform to these standards;
- provide financial assistance to needy health care providers to adopt HIT; and
- authorize grants for the creation of regional/local networks of health care providers.

We believe the adoption of these provisions will create a rational, thoughtful system for improving patient care, while redirecting health care spending into more productive, life-saving uses. We also encourage you to ensure that strong and enforceable medical privacy protections are in place to protect the confidentiality of patient data. AACC looks forward to working with you to move this legislation forward.

By way of background, AACC is the principal association of professional laboratory scientists--including MDs, PhDs and medical technologists. AACC's members develop and use chemical concepts, procedures, techniques and instrumentation in health-related investigations and work in hospitals, independent laboratories and the diagnostics industry worldwide. The AACC provides international leadership in advancing the practice and profession of clinical laboratory science and its application to health care. If you have any questions, please call me at (504) 568-4281, or Vince Stine, PhD, Director, Government Affairs, at (202) 835-8721.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Larry Broussard". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Larry Broussard, PhD  
President, AACC