

Eshoo Introduces Legislation to Accelerate Adoption of Health Information Technology

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WASHINGTON, D.C. - Today, Congresswoman Anna G. Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, introduced H.R. 3800, the Promotion of Health Information Technology (HIT) Act to accelerate the adoption of health information technology and increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the U.S. healthcare system.

"We live in the Information Age, but health care, one of the most information-intensive segments of our economy, remains mired in a pen-and-paper past. This is a disservice to patients and to our healthcare system," said Eshoo, a senior Member of the Energy and Commerce Health Subcommittee.

"Speeding the adoption of health information technology will have a powerful effect on enhancing patient safety, reducing medical errors, improving the quality of care and reducing healthcare costs," Eshoo said. "The Promotion of Health Information Technology Act will ensure that the federal government will foster the development and implementation of advanced Health IT networks and technologies in our country."

Expert panels, including the Institute of Medicine and National Committee on Vital and Health Statistics, support the implementation of HIT to modernize the U.S. healthcare system. But the deployment of HIT and the adoption of important patient tools such as electronic health records (EHRs) have not kept pace with technological advances in other industries.

The bipartisan Promotion of HIT Act will increase the deployment of HIT by streamlining the process for the adoption of HIT interoperability standards. It requires the federal government to abide by those standards, and it authorizes funding to promote HIT adoption nationwide. The bill also includes strong patient protections.

Specifically, the legislation:

- Establishes the position of National Coordinator for HIT within the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to facilitate the exchange of interoperable health information and coordinate the government's HIT activities and procurement.

- Creates the Partnership for Health Care Improvement, a public-private advisory body to recommend or endorse

appropriate HIT interoperability standards and timeframes for adoption. All federal HIT procurement and all federal agencies that collect health data electronically will be required to comply with the standards endorsed by the partnership.

- Authorizes funding for grants to assist state and local governments adopt and promote HIT within their states. It also provides incentives for utilizing broadband to deliver HIT in underserved areas and authorizes funding to train qualified HIT professionals.

- Protects patients and their sensitive medical information by establishing a system to certify EHR products. Patients are guaranteed the right to inspect and obtain a copy of their EHR and to correct any inaccurate or fraudulent information.

H.R. 3800 has been referred to the Energy and Commerce Committee.

Bill Information

- Eshoo Statement
- PHIT Summary
- PHIT Section-by-Section
- PHIT Bill Text

Endorsements

- Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS)
- HealthIT Now!
- Business Roundtable
- IBM
- Siemens
- PHIT ITI Council Letter
- Divided We Fail
- American Electronics Association

