

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
October 18, 2007

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**KENNEDY CALLS FOR ACTION ON PATIENT SAFETY LEGISLATION**

WASHINGTON, DC— Today, Senator Edward M. Kennedy, Chairman of the Health, Education, Labor and Pensions Committee, sent the following letter to the Secretary of HHS, Michael Leavitt, asking for information on the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act.

The Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act (Public Law 109-41), which was signed into law on July 29, 2005, protects confidential patient information that is collected by health care providers. This letter calls for the release of final regulations for this Act. Chairman Kennedy requests that the Department of Health and Human Services prepare a timeline detailing the development of regulations to ensure that this important law will be implemented.

The text of the letter appears below.

October 18, 2007

**VIA FACSIMILE & U.S. MAIL**

The Honorable Michael Leavitt  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health & Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Mr. Leavitt:

I am writing to you about the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act (Public Law 109-41), which was signed into law on July 29, 2005. Over four months ago, I wrote to you about my concern that the regulations for this law had not been finalized despite the fact that the Agency for Healthcare Research and Quality submitted recommendations for the regulations at the end of 2006. I am extremely disappointed and troubled to discover that today, the regulations have still not been issued, and the timeline I requested has not been provided to me.

As you know, the Patient Safety and Quality Improvement Act is an important law that evidences the Federal Government's commitment to fostering a culture of patient safety by creating Patient Safety Organizations that collect, aggregate, and analyze confidential patient safety data and information reported by health care providers. Because I believe this law is too important to allow it to go without formalized

regulations, I request that your office provide me with a detailed timeline describing the paper trail detailing who has reviewed the draft regulations during the past year and a half. I also request that you include a proposed timeline detailing the next steps that the draft regulations will undergo before they are finalized and released to the public. I ask that your office coordinate the production of this data with Sandra Gallardo and Nicholas W. Bath, Counsel to the Committee, at (202) 224-3112. Please produce this timeline to my office by close of business on November 2, 2007.

I am committed to making sure this important law is fully implemented. Thank you for your attention to this very important matter.

Sincerely,

Edward M. Kennedy  
Chairman