

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 28, 2016

The Honorable Sylvia M. Burwell  
Secretary  
U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
200 Independence Avenue, S.W.  
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Burwell,

We write to ask your feedback on our draft changes to the Meaningful Use program. The Meaningful Use program administered by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) seeks to promote broad adoption of electronic health records (EHRs) by health care providers. We recognize the potential Meaningful Use of health information technology (health IT) and widespread adoption of EHRs hold to support high-quality care for patients. Therefore, since the enactment of the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act, we have focused on progress toward the goal of interoperability and realizing the full value of health IT for providers and, most importantly, their patients.

In 2013 we issued a report, "*REBOOT: Re-examining the Strategies Needed to Successfully Adopt Health IT*," to inform discussion about what was, and was not, working well with the adoption of EHRs. Our report closely examined the progress toward interoperability, concerns around the security of patient information, the potential for improved healthcare and reduced costs through the widespread adoption of health IT, and the long-term sustainability of health IT programs.

We received critical feedback in response to our 2013 report which has informed our work on these issues. We also engaged with stakeholders including health IT developers, providers, and patient-focused organizations to assess their experiences with the Meaningful Use program, as well as their concerns with the state of health IT, specifically EHRs, over the years. In response to this feedback we have identified a few key policy changes outlined in the enclosed draft legislation, and we respectfully request feedback as part of our continued constructive dialogue on these issues. These policies seek to provide CMS with the tools and guidance necessary to advance the use of EHRs as part of utilizing health IT to the benefit of patients in a manner that protects the significant taxpayer investment in our nation's health care system. We respectfully request this feedback not later than May 13, 2016.

Thank you in advance for your technical assistance on this draft legislation.

Sincerely,

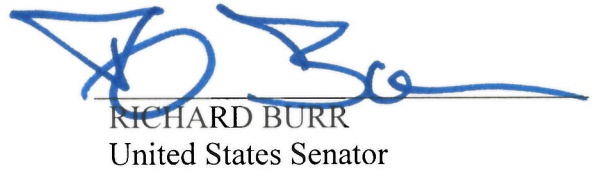
  
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JOHN THUNE  
United States Senator

  
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LAMAR ALEXANDER  
United States Senator



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PAT ROBERTS  
United States Senator



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RICHARD BURR  
United States Senator



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MICHAEL B. ENZI  
United States Senator



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BILL CASSIDY, M.D.  
United States Senator

CC: Andy Slavitt, Acting Administrator, Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services