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PATIENT PRIVACY RIGHTS URGES STRONG SUPPORT FOR THE *INDEPENDENT HEALTH RECORD TRUST ACT*

Patient Privacy Rights applauds Representatives Dennis Moore (D-KS) and Paul Ryan (R-WI), the sponsors of the *Independent Health Record Trust Act*, and their 30 bipartisan co-sponsors of this legislation that provides the framework for building the first-ever data banks to hold personal electronic records that grant Americans ironclad federal rights to control the information they deposit in these trusts.

Think about it: thousands of data banks exist today that contain massive amounts highly sensitive information about each of us, such as financial records, credit records, records of everything we buy, medical records, prescription records, disease registries, mental health records, genetic and DNA records, gun purchases, drivers' licenses, voter registration records, hospital records, etc, etc. But Americans have ZERO control over any of these data bases.

Millions of state, federal, and corporate data bases are brimming with massive amounts of our sensitive personal information solely controlled by those organizations. Today the uses, sale, and disclosure of all of our highly personal electronic data is controlled by others whose commercial interests or surveillance directly conflicts with our best interests.

This Act is truly historic---it marks the very first time that Congress has recognized the need to develop new laws to protect and strengthen Americans' long-standing Constitutional rights and liberties in the Digital Age.

It is fitting that the sponsors and co-sponsors of this Act have chosen to start to protect our privacy rights by building a private and secure place to keep electronic health information. Medical records have centuries of the strongest possible legal and ethical protections that exist for any personal information---but those building electronic health systems today have completely ignored the law and the Hippocratic Oath to steal the nation's valuable health records.

Technology can be used to destroy the fundamental rights and freedoms of all 295 million Americans or it can be used to provide convenient instantaneous electronic privacy protections and controls down to the level of the data field that are impossible to create for paper records systems. Congress cannot protect our medical privacy by passing the ***Independent Health Record Trust Act*** alone---but it is an excellent start. This Act will stem the hemorrhaging of Americans health records, though major surgery is still needed to ensure privacy rights in the Digital Age.

About Patient Privacy Rights

Patient Privacy Rights is a national consumer watchdog organization based in Austin, TX. The mission of Patient Privacy Rights is to empower Americans to protect and preserve their human rights to medical privacy. Patient Privacy Rights believes Americans should have the right to decide who can see and use their medical records and is educating Americans about threats to patient privacy. They have launched an online petition for Americans to tell Congress "I Want My Medical Privacy".

Web site: www.patientprivacyrights.org

Sign the "I Want My Medical Privacy" Petition: www.patientprivacyrights.org/petition

To view previous letters to Congress from the Coalition for Patient Privacy:
www.patientprivacyrights.org/privacycoalition