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## SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH MARKUP ON H.R. 6357, "THE PRO(TECH)T ACT"

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased that we are considering H.R. 6357, Health Information Technology (HIT) and privacy legislation introduced by Chairman Pallone, Ranking Members Barton and Deal, and me.

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June 25, 2008

Mr. Chairman, I am pleased that we are considering H.R. 6357, Health Information Technology (HIT) and privacy legislation introduced by Chairman Pallone, Ranking Members Barton and Deal, and me. This legislation builds upon the dedicated work of Reps. Eshoo, Rogers, Gordon, Waxman, Gonzalez, Markey, Capps, and Towns.

This bill, titled the "Protecting Records, Optimizing Treatment, and Easing Communication through Healthcare Technology Act of 2008", or the "PRO(TECH)T Act", promotes the nationwide adoption of an HIT infrastructure. Such adoption will encourage doctors, hospitals, insurers, and the Government to exchange health information electronically across the country. In addition, the bill encourages the use of an electronic health records for each person in the United States by 2014.

This legislation will lower healthcare costs, reduce medical errors, and increase the quality and efficiency of our Nation's healthcare system. In addition, protecting a patient's privacy in this new electronic age is essential, and this bill provides for additional and stronger privacy protections and enforcement provisions.

The PRO(TECH)T Act maintains the basic framework of the HIT/Privacy discussion draft released on May 22, 2008. It makes permanent the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONCHIT) at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, establishes incentives for the adoption and use of HIT, and strengthens the law protecting the security and privacy of an individual's health information. The legislation improves upon the discussion draft by broadening the considerations and sources of public and private input that the Government must take into account when providing for the nationwide adoption of HIT. The legislation also clarifies and improves several other provisions based on input provided on the discussion draft.

Again, I thank my colleagues  
and those who have contributed to the PRO(TECH)T Act before us today. I  
hope that all Members of this Committee will continue to work in a  
bipartisan manner in support of this important legislation.

Prepared by the Committee on Energy and Commerce

2125 Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC 20515