

Opening Statement of the Honorable Fred Upton
Subcommittee on Communications and Technology and Subcommittee on Health
Hearing on “21st Century Technology for 21st Century Cures”
July 17, 2014

(As Prepared for Delivery)

With this hearing we continue our commitment to modernizing laws and regulations to keep pace with the breakneck speed of the innovation era. Two leading initiatives have been our CommActUpdate, which seeks to update the 80-year-old laws governing the communications and technology sectors, and 21st Century Cures, which aims to accelerate the pace of cures and treatments. Today, we have the unique opportunity to bring together two of our subcommittees and look at the intersection of these efforts and the ways in which new technology is enabling remarkable advances in medical care and research.

Our witnesses include established tech companies that are bringing their expertise to bear on the challenges of modern health care as well as startups that are focused solely on tech solutions for patients and clinicians. From electronic health records to cloud storage of genome research and apps that identify preventive health strategies, we are looking at the future of medicine. Technology is supporting proactive solutions, collaborative research, and improved communications between patients and their doctors.

Our committee has gone great lengths to encourage investment and innovation in the U.S. technology sector, and there are few applications of that work more important than the health of all Americans. We have the opportunity to not only enable new cures, but accelerate the pace at which they are realized. By taking full advantage of available technology, the possibilities for the future of health care gives us hope. In June, we held a roundtable to explore the opportunities and obstacles surrounding digital health care, and I look forward to continuing that conversation today. It is my hope that this hearing, like the roundtable, will help us identify ways in which this committee and Congress can support the adoption of life saving technologies in the health care sector.

I thank the witnesses for being here with us today and sharing their experiences as health tech innovators.

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