

October 14, 2003

The Honorable Robert Graham
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Olympia Snowe
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Amo Houghton
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Earl Pomeroy
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senators Graham and Snowe and Representatives Houghton and Pomeroy:

Long engaged in efforts to improve patient safety, the undersigned organizations strongly support the "Medication Errors Reduction Act of 2003." This critical legislation would fund efforts to improve our nation's clinical safety systems. Since the release of the 1999 Institute of Medicine report, *To Err is Human*, we have collectively embraced a more vigorous commitment to the advancement of patient safety in our healthcare system.

Concern over improving the quality of our nation's health care extends far beyond the provider community. The business community, consumers, and Labor have an equally vested interest. While the issues surrounding the improvement of patient safety are numerous and complex, we agree that the facilitated deployment of new technologies to certain providers would be of immense benefit. Further, we believe that clinical healthcare informatics systems designed to reduce the incidence of adverse events and complications stemming from medication errors hold great promise.

New and evolving technologies like computer physician order-entry (CPOE), bedside verification, and automated pharmacy dispensing could prove particularly beneficial to many healthcare providers. Still, sizeable barriers to acquisition and deployment exist. The inability to finance such systems is perhaps the most insurmountable-but the easiest to address, as well. This legislation would permit providers and their patients to reap the rewards of these critical patient safety improvement technology tools.

Again, we thank you for having introduced the "Medication Errors Reduction Act of 2003," and look forward to working with you toward enactment.

Sincerely,

Premier, Inc.
IBM
VHA, Inc.
Vanderbilt University Medical Center
New York Presbyterian Hospital
Aetna
McKesson Corporation
Siemens
AmerisourceBergen Corporation
American Health Packaging
AutoMed
Choice Systems, Inc.
Pharmacy Healthcare Solutions
Telepharmacy Solutions
National Rural Health Association
National Association of Children's Hospitals
Verizon
Becton Dickenson
Federation of American Hospitals
American Health Care Association

AFL-CIO
Cardinal Health
American Society of Health-System Pharmacists
Healthcare Leadership Council
eHealth Initiative
Catholic Health Association of the United States
Association of American Medical Colleges
AFSCME