



October 22, 2014

The Honorable Renee Ellmers
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Jim Matheson
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Ellmers and Matheson:

On behalf of the American College of Physicians (ACP), I am writing to express our support for the legislation you recently introduced, H.R. 5481, *the Flexibility in Health IT Reporting (Flex-IT) Act of 2014*. The College appreciates your leadership and efforts in addressing this burden to physicians participating in the Medicare and Medicaid electronic health record (EHR) incentive program.

ACP is the largest medical specialty organization and the second-largest physician group in the United States. ACP members include 141,000 internal medicine physicians (internists), related subspecialists, and medical students committed to advancing the science and practice of medicine. Internal medicine physicians are specialists who apply scientific knowledge and clinical expertise to the diagnosis, treatment, and compassionate care of adults across the spectrum from health to complex illness.

Our members have enthusiastically participated in the EHR Incentive Program since its conception. They are supportive of its goals and recognize the diligent work of all those involved. However, we believe the success of the program is heavily dependent upon allowing flexibility with the 2015 reporting period requirements by allowing Eligible Professionals (EPs) to demonstrate meaningful use of their technology for 90 days instead of one full year. ACP recognizes the success this program has had and can have on advancing health information technology within the United States and strongly urges against jeopardizing that success by requiring EPs and hospitals to conform to a reporting requirement that will be impossible for most to meet.

H.R. 5481 would reduce the reporting period for EPs participating in the Medicare and Medicaid EHR incentive payment program from one full year to 90 days in 2015. We believe that this would speed the movement of interoperability throughout the health care world – not slow it.

We appreciate your continued leadership on this important issue and will make every effort to help advance this necessary legislation. We stand ready to serve as a resource and welcome the opportunity to work with you going forward.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'David A. Fleming', with a stylized flourish at the end.

David A. Fleming, MD, MA, FACP
President