The Honorable Daniel K. Inouye  
Chairman  
Committee on Appropriations  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Mr. Chairman:

This letter responds to a request in Senate Report 112-77, page 228, accompanying H.R. 2219, the Department of Defense (DoD) Appropriations Bill, 2012; namely:

To consider the integration of “Web-based health information technologies designed to engage the patient and the Service provider to assure that evidence-based decision support can help predict resources and prospectively prepare investigations of syndromic problems and epidemiologic needs” into the Integrated Electronic Health Record (iEHR).

Faced with a mutual need to modernize their legacy electronic health record (EHR) systems, DoD and Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) have agreed to implement a joint, common EHR platform going forward, purchasing commercially available components for joint use whenever possible and cost effective. This integrated EHR, or iEHR, will leverage both “open source” and traditional approaches to software acquisition in order to foster innovation and expedite delivery of products to the user.

On June 23, 2011, the Secretaries of DoD and VA approved plans to implement the iEHR and an effective governance structure to oversee the effort. In October 2011, the Departments re-chartered the DoD-VA Interagency Program Office (IPO), significantly expanding its role to lead the Departments in the development and implementation of iEHR. To further ensure effective coordination between DoD and VA on this complex health information technology (IT) initiative, the Departments chartered the Health Architecture Review Board (HARB) to address standards, quality assurance, integration, transparency, visibility, and monitoring of Enterprise Architecture needed for DoD/VA interagency health IT. The Departments also modified the charters of the Health Executive Council (HEC), the HEC Information Management/Information Technology (IM/IT) Working Group, and the Interagency Clinical Informatics Board (ICIB) to ensure the adequate involvement of medical practitioners in the identification of clinical requirements and process definition.

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By copy of this letter, the IPO will inform the HEC and the ICIB of the committee’s particular interest in clinical decision support technologies. Each year, the committee will have an opportunity to review iEHR achievements through the VA/DoD Joint Executive Council Annual Report to Congress and the IPO’s Annual Report to Congress. Similar letters are being provided to the other committees of interest in the House and Senate.

Thank you for your interest in the health and well-being of our Service members, veterans, and their families.

Sincerely,

[Signature]

Go Ann Rooney
Acting

cc:
The Honorable Thad Cochran
Vice Chairman
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Acting

cc: The Honorable Norman D. Dicks
Ranking Member
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Sincerely,

Jo Ann Rooney
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cc: The Honorable Norman D. Dicks
Ranking Member
The Honorable Carl Levin  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

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Ranking Member
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Jo Ann Rooney
Acting

cc:
The Honorable Lindsey Graham
Ranking Member
The Honorable Howard P. "Buck" McKeon  
Chairman  
Committee on Armed Services  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC  20515  

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Sincerely,

[Signature]

cc:
The Honorable Adam Smith
Ranking Member

[Signature]
The Honorable Joe Wilson
Chairman
Subcommittee on Military Personnel
Committee on Armed Services
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

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The Honorable Patty Murray
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