

TECHNOLOGY CEO COUNCIL



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Policy Issues: Health Care IT

In most ways, the United States is the global leader in health care. From the best-trained doctors to the most state-of-the art medical equipment to breakthrough treatments for deadly diseases, Americans expect and often receive the best care anywhere.

Yet despite our many assets and strengths, there is significant room for improvement. Our \$1.8 trillion medical system depends far too much on antiquated paper files and out-of-date customs to make it work. The digital tools that have radically improved productivity and quality across our economy have barely touched health care, and it shows. While almost every sector of our economy is transforming itself through new IT-enabled processes (such as direct-to-consumer connectivity, real-time online access to critical information and aggregation and analysis of detailed data), our health care sector remains characterized by islands of advanced technologies in a sea of paper.

As a result of this poor information management, our health care system too often fails our patients. Americans spend significantly more per capita on health care than the citizens of any other country, yet we do not receive commensurately greater quality of care across the board. Paper-based systems contribute to medical errors that drive up costs and harm patient safety. Health care is all too often inconvenient for patients, with "siloed" information beyond the reach of those who need it.

We're letting down our doctors too. By keeping vital patient information out of their hands, we limit their ability to make the best medical decisions. By failing to automate prescribing and delivery systems, we subvert their intentions and confuse their instructions. By failing to collect information on quality and outcomes, we decline to provide them with the best data they could have about the results of medications and treatments, information that would help them save lives.

The Technology CEO Council believes policy makers and business leaders have the opportunity and obligation to address this issue head-on. In our latest report, "A Healthy System: How Improved Information Management Can Transform the Quality, Efficiency and Value of Americans' Health Care," we offer:

- **A Call to Action** that highlights our vision and offers specific recommendations;
- **An e-Health Readiness Guide** that provides benchmarks for progress and action steps for organizations and individuals;
- **Model Legislation** for state lawmakers to use as the basis for action and debate.

The Technology CEO Council has made health IT one of its priority issues and will continue working with policymakers and other health leaders to help ensure a true health care "system" for Americans. Former Chairman Craig Barrett represents the Council on the federal advisory committee to the Secretary of Health and Human Services, America's Health Information Community (AHIC).

Files

- Barrett Named to AHIC
- CSPP Applauds Introduction of Frist-Clinton Health IT Bill (PDF)

Links

- ["Seeking the Cure for Health Care"](#)
- ["A Better Prescription"](#)

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