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## **HIMSS Electronic Health Record Association Supports Economic Stimulus Package as Key to Healthcare Transformation**

CHICAGO (February 17, 2009) – The Electronic Health Records Association (EHR Association), in partnership with the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS), supports the compromise legislation to provide economic stimulus through funding of health information technology (HIT), promulgation of standards and enhancements to privacy regulations, as signed into law by President Barack Obama as part of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009.

“We have worked closely with the US House of Representatives, US Senate and industry partners to provide information on the practical application of HIT throughout the development of this important economic recovery package,” said Justin Barnes, EHR Association Chairman. “It’s not just about greater adoption of electronic health records, which, of course, are an important infrastructure component of the stimulus package, but, more fundamentally, we want to ensure Americans are afforded the real benefits of interoperable health IT and EHRs, which are proven to save lives, reduce costs and increase access to quality care.”

The EHR Association represents 41 member companies who are the major suppliers of electronic health record systems (EHRs) in the United States. EHR Association members have worked closely with physician practices and hospitals to successfully deploy thousands of EHRs, helping to improve the quality and efficiency of healthcare delivery.

“High quality, certified EHRs are ready for implementation today, and in fact are being implemented successfully throughout the United States”, Barnes added. “The incentives and grants to healthcare organizations in this legislation will require that our customers demonstrate “meaningful use” of certified EHR technologies. We understand the dedication required to implement EHRs and to meet the “meaningful use” criterion, and we’re prepared to support those efforts immediately. The time is now for physicians, hospitals and other eligible providers who have not yet adopted certified EHRs to do so in order to be eligible for the new incentives, grants and loans as soon as they are available

The HIMSS EHR Association, now in its fifth year, provides leadership for the electronic health record community in the harmonization of HIT standards, the EHR certification process, standards-based healthcare interoperability, and performance and quality measures. The Association has participated in all of these initiatives over the years, adding its extensive experience in the development and deployment of EHRs. Speaking with a unified voice to represent its membership and their customers, EHR Association executives have supported codification of the Office of the National Coordinator for Health IT (ONC) and standards approach that builds on the framework created by the National eHealth Collaborative, the Health IT Standards Panel (HITSP) and the Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology IT (CCHIT).

“We are pleased that the work our industry has done to accelerate EHR interoperability, standards, and accelerated adoption over the past several years will serve as the foundation for ongoing efforts to transform the healthcare system,” said Andy Ury, MD, EHR Association Vice Chair. “We look forward to working closely with our customers to provide the tools and services that they will need to take advantage of the unprecedented opportunity this legislation offers”, Dr. Ury concluded.

#### **About HIMSS EHR Association**

HIMSS EHR Association is a trade association of electronic health record (EHR) companies that join together to lead the HIT industry in the accelerated adoption of electronic health records in hospital and ambulatory care settings in the US. The Association provides a leadership forum for the vendor community to speak with a unified voice relative to standards development, the EHR certification process, interoperability, performance and quality measures, and other EHR issues as they become subject to increasing government, insurance and provider-driven initiatives and requests. Membership is open to HIMSS Corporate Members companies that design, develop and market their own EHRs. The Association is a partner of the Healthcare Information and Management Systems Society (HIMSS) and operates as an organizational unit within HIMSS. For more information, visit <http://www.himssEHRA.org>.

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