For Immediate Release  
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CCHF Applauds U.S. Senate’s Continued Prohibition on Unique Patient Identifier  

National Patient ID Would Become Master Key, Unlocking Treasure Trove of Confidential Patient Information Without Consent  

ST. PAUL, Minn.—Citizens’ Council for Health Freedom (CCHF) applauds the U.S. Senate’s proposed Labor-HHS fiscal 2020 budget released on Wednesday that retains former Congressman Ron Paul’s longstanding prohibition on funding the development of a government-issued unique patient identifier (UPI).

CCHF has worked tirelessly to stop the UPI, and has long endeavored to bring an associated issue into public awareness: HIPAA is a data-sharing rule, not a privacy rule. According to the federal government, 2.2 million entities can potentially have access to private information without patient permission.

“The UPI would facilitate the vast data-sharing permitted without consent under HIPAA,” said Twila Brase, president and co-founder of CCHF. “This national patient ID would enable government and other third parties to link every piece of data in every medical record of every patient into one longitudinal digital dossier, leaving patients with no options for keeping their data, their personal lives, and their medical conditions confidential. As troubling as the privacy implications, this federal ID card would also become mandatory for patient access to care. In short -- no card, no care.”

Last June, CCHF formed a coalition to stop the unique patient identifier. Seven other free-market organizations co-signed a letter written by CCHF to President Donald Trump requesting he veto H.R. 2740 if any language striking the prohibition on using federal funds to create a UPI remained in the bill.

CCHF disagrees with claims made by organizations like the American Hospital Association that a UPI would improve the efficiency and security of the health information exchange, and increase patient safety. This one-stop-shop number for accessing medical information would instead leave patients vulnerable to outside intrusion, third-party controls over treatment decisions, and debilitating cyberattacks.

CCHF has existed for more than 20 years to protect health care choices, individualized patient care, and medical and genetic privacy rights.

Twila Brase was recently selected as one of 17 leaders to participate in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) Quality Summit, which will be used to provide the president with a roadmap for restructuring quality measurement programs. She is the author of the award-winning book, “Big Brother in the Exam Room: The Dangerous Truth About Electronic Health Records.”
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