Transcript of Manny Munson-Regala’s (MN Dept of Health) Response to Chairwoman Rep. Peggy Scott

Civil Law and Data Practices – House of Representatives
Hearing on “Protecting Medical Privacy in Minnesota”
Tuesday, February 17, 2015
Transcribed by Matt Flanders, CCH Freedom
http://ww2.house.leg.state.mn.us/audio/mp3ls89/civil021715.mp3

1:06:55
Peggy Scott:

“Mr. Munson Regala, I think there are two issues here – not just the fact that what you just said, that it’s just a way for providers to share with one another. There may be patients that don’t want that first of all. And second of all, a lot of them, I know of at least one psychologist in my district that works from their home, and 15 thousand dollars to get a set up for a system is a hardship for a lot of people. And again I think it also goes back to patient consent, but if every state was doing it, I might think well, maybe there’s something to it. But when there’s only two states that are doing this and mandating this, I don’t think we want to be the outlier on this issue. And I guess I would look for your response on that.”

1:07:57
Manny Munson-Regala, MN Dept of Health:

“Madame Chair, thank you. So let me quick respond to the affordability aspect. Both the state of Minnesota and federal government have a fairly robust set of grant programs to help providers make the transition from paper records to electronic heath records. So I would suggest that if you have an individual provider complaining about the cost, you might want to refer them to the department because there may be a grant program to help them manage their transition.

“The second thing I would make about the requirement, at the risk of pulling out a gun I don’t have, our law has no penalties for it. If you want to think about our mandate, it’s very much in the form of a strongly worded recommendation from our state. So when folks talk about this mandate, I make the observation, at the end of the day, it’s about their compliance. We’d like to think they’d see the utility and benefit of this requirement for their patients, but if they disagree, we have no authority to fine anyone for failure to comply.”

1:09:10