

Testimony
Before
U.S. House Committee on Science and Technology

September 26th, 2007

Thank you very much Chairman Gordon, Ranking Member Hall and distinguished members of the Committee and staff. My name is Justin Barnes and I am the Vice President of Marketing and Government Affairs for Greenway Medical Technologies, a leading provider of integrated electronic health record (EHR), practice management and interoperability software solutions for physicians' practices. It is always a great honor and pleasure to work with members of Congress and their staff as I believe we all have a common goal to shape the new face of the healthcare industry by utilizing the vast contributions that information technology (IT) offers healthcare providers, patients and payers in achieving goals of reduced medical errors, lower costs, better quality and improved efficiency within our nation's healthcare system.

In addition to representing Greenway, I am a board member of the HIMSS Electronic Health Record Vendor's Association (EHRVA) which is comprised of the nation's leading EHR companies currently representing roughly 96% of all EHR's implemented in America today. In addition, I reside on the board of the National Governors Association (NGA) Health Information Protection Task Force and the Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology (CCHIT) Privacy Expert Panel. My perspective today will be that of a small business software and services provider that is actively engaging every facet of the healthcare industry to support developing a national strategy for widespread adoption of health information technology (HIT) and for converting this adoption into quality and efficiency improvements. The faster we align incentives, technical standards and guideline requirements, the faster we improve care, increase quality, contain costs and save lives.

This Statement focuses on Greenway's and our industry's dedication to assisting Congress, the U.S. House Committee on Science and Technology and the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) in their goals of supporting the integration of the healthcare information enterprise in the United States. In this pursuit, Greenway, HIMSS and the EHRVA support a truly transparent process and equal collaboration of public and private entities. This collaboration has proven recently to reduce barriers with federal regulations as well as barriers with harmonizing standards. Over the past few years, Greenway and the entire healthcare industry has made significant strides with EHR adoption, standards convergence, interoperability and proven return on investment (ROI) for long-term sustainability of our nation's healthcare transformation process. Specifically, Greenway customer practices now have the opportunity for interoperability among their local community which encompasses regional care providers, patients and hospitals. Our customers alone have realized an annual \$21,600 to \$81,500 post-implementation ROI per physician. With paperwork reduced, collections increased and coding improved, physicians provide a higher quality of care and also operate a more efficient business.

While HIT and EHR adoption currently grows at a record pace, we possess the responsibility to ensure that every policy enacted and every rule that is proposed must sustain our current investments and progress. While we applaud the focus that the President, Congress and the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services have applied to this industry transformation, we must ensure that all decisions are created by entities that have the essential experience, dedication and factual evidence necessary to put self-sustaining plans and policy in place. An example of a Greenway, HIMSS and EHRVA-endorsed article of legislation is U.S. House bill 2377, the ADOPT HIT Act of 2007, which uses Section 179 of the tax code to provide physician purchasing incentives that can further increase HIT adoption by reducing up-front practice costs over the first year of EHR implementation. This bill has been introduced in the U.S. House.

Greenway applauds your efforts to authorize NIST to increase its efforts in support of the integration of the healthcare information enterprise in the United States. NIST already plays an important role in public and private sector collaborations such as Integrating the Healthcare Enterprise (IHE) and the Health Information Technology Standards Panel (HITSP) and that role should be maintained. In addition, NIST should be encouraged to work collaboratively to make these initiatives even more effective and Congress can assist by formally recognizing HITSP in any legislative language. HITSP is a best practice because of its public and private collaboration, transparency and use of multi-stakeholder processes like IHE. IHE has a 10-year legacy of standards and testing harmonization with global ramifications and for that reason, it is imperative for NIST to recognize HITSP and IHE processes.

From a financial investment standpoint, it is estimated that the private sector has invested \$50 million - \$100 million collectively in the past few years following IHE, HITSP and certification initiatives and that has resulted in a healthcare transformation in the important areas of HIT adoption and interoperability. More momentum has been created nationally and internationally in these areas than ever before. While this momentum could be better, it is crucial that influential bodies like Congress, the President's Administration and NIST work together to maintain this impetus and not create a new alternative de facto testing, standards or certification authority.

This is an exciting time to help guide and sustain the momentum in the healthcare information technology industry. We have the opportunity to create the most efficient healthcare system in the world and while this is a daunting challenge, it is certainly achievable. If we continue to work together in public and private collaboration, build on present successes with HITSP and take the prudent and fiscally responsible steps necessary, we will achieve our healthcare transformation goals and recognize the estimated \$100-\$200 billion of U.S. annual savings with a fully-integrated and interoperable healthcare system. Speaking on behalf of the private sector, we are ready as an industry to continue our progress in partnership with Congress and federal agencies in making these goals a reality.

Chairman Gordon and distinguished members of the Committee and staff, I want to thank you for this opportunity and your dedication to the integration of the healthcare information enterprise. I hope that my comments will help steer ideas and thoughts that can be transmitted into innovative policies shaping the future of healthcare in this country. Thank you very much.

Biographical Information for

Justin T. Barnes

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As a healthcare software executive and public policy expert, Justin Barnes manages Greenway's Strategy, Marketing, Corporate Development and Government Affairs departments. With a background in healthcare information technology (HIT), corporate operations and legislative policy, Barnes is responsible for building and executing Greenway's corporate strategy, industry and government relations. Barnes resides on several HIT and Electronic Health Record (EHR) industry governance boards and brings the essential continuum of experience from Silicon Valley Start-up's to Industry-leading Fortune 20 conglomerates.

Prior to Greenway Medical Technologies, Barnes was a member of the founding team and Vice President of Sales Operations and Account Development at Healinx Corporation. Today, Healinx is known as the RelayHealth Division of McKesson and continues as the premier provider of secure online healthcare communication services linking patients, healthcare professionals, payors, and pharmacies efficiently, affordably and securely.

Before joining Healinx, Barnes held several Sales and Operations positions with HBO & Company that subsequently merged with McKesson in 1999. He served under the Enterprise Group and was responsible for sales operations of the Pathways Smart Medical Record (SMR) application.

Barnes has formally addressed Congress and the President's Administration on seven occasions between 2005 and 2007. Barnes has also been published in 27 journals, magazines and broadcast media outlets relating to national leadership of HIT and EHR adoption efforts.

Elected and Appointed Governance & Advisory Positions

Member of National Governors Association (NGA) Health Information Protection Task Force of the State Alliance for E-Health
Board Member of the HIMSS Electronic Health Record Vendors Association (EHRVA)
Board Member of Georgia Tech's Center for Health, Healthcare and Eldercare Innovation (CHHEI)
Member of Certification Commission for Healthcare Information Technology (CCHIT)
Privacy Expert Panel
Co-Chair, Government Relations, National HIT Week
Chairman of Membership Committee of EHRVA
Member of HIMSS Advocacy and Public Policy Steering Committee
Member of eHealth Initiatives Policy Work Group
Member of EHRVA Government Relations Work Group
Member of HIMSS HIT Advisory Council
Member of HIMSS Government Relations Roundtable