



COMMITTEE ON
SCIENCE, SPACE, & TECHNOLOGY
Lamar Smith, Chairman

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Statement of Research & Technology Subcommittee Chairwoman Barbara Comstock (R-Va.)
Smart Health: Empowering the Future of Mobile Apps

Chairwoman Comstock: Since the introduction of the smart phone, mobile applications – or apps - have permeated all aspects of our lives. While there is an app for just about anything we want to do – from finding the nearest and cheapest gas station to depositing a check – our focus today is on health apps. The rapid growth of this game-changing technology is a reflection of the ingenuity of app designers, and the market of consumers ready, willing and able to take advantage of what technology has to offer in order to be more personally involved in improving our healthcare.

When it comes to our health, especially for the younger generation, it can be easy to ignore it at times and make excuses to skip visits to the doctor for regular check-ups and physicals. Whether it's because of family or work obligations, too often we find it inconvenient to go to the physician's office.

It can be difficult to make an informed decision about your health and whether or not you should make that doctor's appointment. But with the abundance of health apps and wearable technologies which cover a wide variety of diseases, we can now exercise more control over our lives by availing ourselves of data that can aid our decision-making process regarding our health.

This data also benefits those who suffer from an ailment or a chronic disease. Whether it's cancer, epilepsy or diabetes, the more data we have about ourselves that we are personally aware of, the more likely we are to be able to receive precise and comprehensive care from our physicians.

This new revolution in technology can and should open up a new revolution in all of us being personally engaged and responsible about our healthcare. I'm excited we can now put more control of our healthcare into our own hands.

Our witnesses today are here to talk about technologies they have developed or are developing to help individuals take control of their own health. Two of our witnesses, Dr. Bryan Shaw and Mr. Howard Look have very personal reasons for their endeavors. Dr. Krauss and his colleagues have embarked on some important research using the Apple Watch and the Apple ResearchKit, an open source software framework that may revolutionize medical studies. And Mr. Epstein's technology helps people make

informed decisions about receiving care at reduced costs. This ability to save a few or many dollars is something we can all support.

As with all new technologies, there are of course pros and cons. Understanding what they are and how hurdles can be overcome is part of the process for change. I look forward to hearing about the challenges our witnesses have encountered and the challenges that have yet to be conquered in order for healthcare apps to become a prominent feature of the healthcare system. This is the kind of research and technology that will greatly benefit people, and it will be helpful to hear your thoughts on what role Congress or the federal government can play to help empower the future of mobile apps.

Thank you all for joining us today.

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