

WASHINGTON—

U.S. Reps. Lee Terry (R-NE) and Karen Bass (D-CA) recently introduced bipartisan legislation to amend the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act to extend Electronic Health Record (EHR) Medicaid incentive payments to all Physician Assistants (PAs) whose patient volume includes at least 30 percent Medicaid recipients.

The HITECH Act currently offers the incentive payments to physicians and nurse practitioners who provide primary care to the requisite 30 percent threshold of Medicaid recipients, but limits the EHR incentive payments to care provided by PAs in "PA-led" rural health clinics and federally qualified health centers.

"Physician Assistants are crucial to developing a strengthened primary care workforce in this country as they are able to provide high-quality, cost-effective care in virtually all health care settings. By expanding Medicaid EHR payments to those, PAs across the country and in all types of medical settings will be able to continue serving medically underserved communities," said Rep. Terry.

"Enhanced, quality patient care is the goal of electronic health records. The current HITECH limitation on Medicaid EHR limits the development of EHR systems for Medicaid beneficiaries who are served by PAs. This legislation extends additional support to community health centers and other medical practices in which PAs provide care to a high volume of Medicaid patients," said Rep. Bass.