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Karen B. DeSalvo, MD, MPH, MSc
National Coordinator for Health Information Technology
Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONC)
US Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue SW
Suite 729-D
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Dr. DeSalvo,

AHIMA is pleased to provide this letter of ongoing support of basic principles to achieve an open, connected healthcare community.

AHIMA is the national, non-profit association of health information management (HIM) professionals. With component state associations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico, AHIMA represents more than 103,000 health information management professionals dedicated to effective health information governance, applied informatics and health data analytics. HIM professionals work for more than 40 different employer types in 120 different job functions, including hospitals, physician offices, long term care organizations, clinics, health information technology vendors and developers, consulting firms, life science companies, and government and education systems. AHIMA's members can be found in numerous and diverse roles with a wide range of responsibilities; individual members are hospital administrators; deans of universities; lawyers; privacy and compliance officers; government officials; coders and data analysts; and consultants and industry professionals.

AHIMA continues our commitment to the following principles to advance interoperability among health information systems in support of movement of electronic data. As health information management professionals, our members consider access to information to be a foundational tenet in health system reform.

1. **Consumer access:** To help consumers easily and securely access their electronic health information, directing it to any specified location, learn how their information can be shared and used, and be assured that this information will be effectively and safely used to benefit their health and that of their community.

2. **No Blocking/Transparency**: To help providers share individuals' health information for care with other providers and their patients whenever permitted by law, and not block electronic health information (defined as knowingly and unreasonably interfering with information sharing).
3. **Standards**: Implement federally recognized, national interoperability standards, policies, guidance, and practices for electronic health information, and adopt best practices including those related to privacy and security.

To demonstrate our support of this commitment, AHIMA will continue to work diligently on issues specific to information governance, including integrity of data, security and management of lawfully permitted release of patient health information.

AHIMA and its members look forward to continuing our working collaboration with our federal partners, including the Offices of the National Coordinator and Civil Rights as well as colleagues in the private sector. AHIMA will continue to provide our operational expertise in the areas of HIM excellence for which we are internationally recognized, including coding and clinical documentation improvement, standards and workforce development.

Please feel free to contact Pamela Lane, AHIMA's vice president, policy and government relations directly at (202) 659-9440 or Pamela.lane@ahima.org if we can provide any further information or address questions regarding this letter and future collaboration.

Sincerely,

[signed]

Lynne Thomas Gordon, MBA, RHIA, CAE, FACHE, FAHIMA
Chief Executive Officer