

MARKLE FOUNDATION

August 5, 2005

The Honorable Michael O. Leavitt
Secretary
United States Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Secretary Leavitt:

I am pleased to express my appreciation and support of the nomination of David Lansky by a number of major consumer organizations to serve on the American Health Information Community (AHIC). As you are aware, Dr. Lansky is Senior Director of the Markle Foundation's Health Program, and is Executive Director of our Personal Health Technology Initiative. Over his long career, he has been instrumental in engaging numerous patient and consumer organizations in the continuing challenges of measuring, reporting, and improving the quality of our health care system. He is now leading Markle's collaboration with a broad range of consumer and privacy organizations to engage consumers in using health IT to improve the quality and cost-effectiveness of their health care. We are pleased that so many national organizations place their confidence in David and in Markle's ability to represent their shared concerns in the AHIC process.

As you know, the Markle Foundation identifies and acts on the public policy and technology challenges that accompany the introduction of new information technologies. We believe that these challenges are best addressed through candid and serious discussion among various stakeholder groups – and that active participation by consumers and the general public is vital. Particularly in the health arena, where individual concerns about protecting personal health information are so acute, we believe that active involvement of patients, families, and consumers is essential. Over the past several years, Dr. Lansky has been instrumental in opening and sustaining national discussion about these issues with many of our nation's most influential consumer organizations. These relationships have enriched our own work and will, I am sure, bring fresh thinking and broad public support to the work of AHIC.

We at Markle would be honored to support Dr. Lansky's participation on the AHIC. You know, Mr. Secretary, that we enthusiastically support your efforts to advance the role of IT in our health care system and will be pleased to assist you in any appropriate way. Thank you for your leadership in this critical area.

Sincerely,



Zoe Baird
President