

MARKLE FOUNDATION

Zoë Baird
President

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 share my enthusiastic support for Dr. Herbert Pardes' nomination to participate on the American Health Information Community (AHIC) representing hospitals. I am privileged to know him not only as the visionary chief executive of one of America's great health care institutions, but also as one of the nation's earliest and most vigorous proponents of health care interoperability and as a concerned leader in our community and philanthropy.

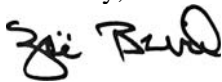
When the Markle Foundation conceived the Connecting for Health agenda in 2002, the term "interoperability" was strange jargon to most health care executives, and few were making substantial investments in information technology. Dr. Pardes not only drove New York Presbyterian's ambitious HIT agenda internally, but he became a champion externally. He agreed to help us start Connecting for Health and has provided remarkable leadership as its Vice Chair over the past four years. He unfailingly attends our meetings and leads the very challenging discussions among our disparate members from all sectors of U.S. health care. He has demonstrated a marvelous commitment to open dialogue and to a multi-stakeholder consensus process that has repeatedly produced credible and practical solutions to seemingly intractable problems.

Dr. Pardes has brought this same passion and skill to other national forums. He understands the benefits of health IT as well as the real challenges of its successful implementation, and he is willing to put in the time to work with others and achieve concrete success.

It has been my particular pleasure to come to know and work with Dr. Pardes as a recent addition to the Markle Foundation's Board of Directors. In this setting he continues to be a hard-working, fully engaged and most constructive partner in our philanthropic and public interest objectives.

I know he will bring the same passion, energy, and talent to the deliberations of the AHIC. I am honored to support Dr. Pardes' nomination to serve on the AHIC. Thank you for your leadership in this critical area.

Sincerely,



Zoë Baird
President