



HOUSE COMMITTEE ON
VETERANS' AFFAIRS
Chairman Phil Roe, M.D.

The Veterans' Electronic Health Record Modernization Oversight Act of 2017

Background:

In June 2017, the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced its plan to replace its Veterans Health Information Systems and Technology Architecture (VistA) with the Cerner Millennium electronic health records (EHR) system, which the Department of Defense (DoD) is already implementing. In the announcement, VA cited the need to achieve seamless interoperability with DoD and a desire to reallocate resources away from in-house software development and back into core functions of VA.

VA is currently in the final stages of its negotiations with Cerner for one of the largest contracts in VA's history. The transition to a new electronic records system will impact nearly every aspect of veterans' health care, and congressional oversight is critical to ensure this effort is carried out responsibly and successfully.

The Veterans' Electronic Health Record Modernization Oversight Act of 2017 directs VA to provide Congress with the project's key planning and implementation documents, in addition to copies of the contracts, to indicate the effort's progress and how the money is being spent. The legislation also requires VA to notify Congress in the event of any significant cost increase, schedule delay, loss of veteran health data or breach of privacy.

The Message:

- VA's migration to the Cerner electronic health records system will be one of the largest contracts and projects in VA's history.
- Congressional oversight is critical to ensure this effort is carried out responsibly and successfully.
- This legislation would give Congress additional tools to carry out effective oversight on VA's transition to its new electronic health records system.