

**PREPARED REMARKS OF FCC CHAIRMAN JULIUS GENACHOWSKI**  
**mHEALTH TASK FORCE EVENT**  
**THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION FOUNDATION**  
**WASHINGTON, D.C.**  
**SEPTEMBER 24, 2012**

Good afternoon. Thank you to Rob Atkinson and ITIF for hosting us today.

More important, Rob, thank you for your work as one of the country's leading thinkers on how we spur innovation to tackle key national challenges like health care, education and the economy.

Today's discussion is also relevant to your new book, *Innovation Economics*. A core premise of your book is that only through the development and adoption of innovative products, services, and business models, can we lead the world in the 21st Century. I couldn't agree more, and I look forward to working with you on initiatives to get there.

And thank you to Dr. Julian Goldman, Robert Jarrin of Qualcomm, and Douglas Trauner of Health Analytics for your work on the mHealth Task Force. Your dedication to this volunteer effort has been outstanding. And thank you to the other members of the Task Force, many of whom are here to today.

This topic - leveraging all our resources to improve medical care - is one I've cared about for a long time. In college I taught CPR, got certified as an EMT, and worked with the Columbia Area Volunteer Ambulance team.

To make a little spending money, I also worked for a private ambulance service in New York City. Now that was something. One of the drivers I worked with loved nothing more than driving the wrong way up one-way avenues in Manhattan.

I decided that law and business might be a wiser career path for me. But I've always admired the men and women who made health care a career choice.

Since I became Chairman, the FCC has been working to harness the power of modern communications technologies to improve the quality of health care, lower costs, and save lives.

Over the past four years we've seen a steady stream of new examples of the ways wireless technology can transform medicine.

Just this month, researchers at Stanford unveiled a tiny new pacemaker so small it could fit on the head of a pin. Instead of using batteries for power, the pacemaker is charged by a wireless transmitter from outside the body, avoiding the need for battery packs that require surgery to replace.

Earlier this year, those same researchers developed a medical sensor so tiny it could float through a patient's blood vessels, powered by the patient's own pulse. Applications of the technology include everything from diagnostic tests to minimally invasive surgeries.

Just last week, the West Health Institute announced that it is licensing technology to wirelessly monitor high-risk pregnancies in remote clinics.

Technologies like this Sense4Baby system could result in healthier babies and mothers, and result in hundreds of millions in cost savings.

And today, products like a "smart" pill box can send wireless automatic reminders to a patient to take her daily medication, and alert her physician or family members if she skips it.

Wireless remote monitoring increases independence, mobility, and comfort for patients within the hospital or at home—and companies are innovating to create smaller, better, more reliable monitors every day.

The FCC has already taken a number of actions to enable our health care system to seize the opportunities of mHealth, which is shorthand for mobile and wireless health technologies

In 2010, we issued our country's first National Broadband Plan, which identified health care as an area of enormous promise for broadband-enabled innovation. The plan includes a chapter of recommendations on health care, which we have worked to implement.

As recommended by the Broadband Plan, we entered into an unprecedented partnership with the Food and Drug Administration to help ensure that communications-related medical innovations can swiftly and safely be brought to market.

Collaboration with other federal agencies is incredibly important. We have a strong ongoing relationship with HHS and I've discussed many times with Secretary Sibelius how to harness the opportunity of broadband in health care and I look forward to continuing those discussions.

Last November, the Commission dedicated spectrum for Medical Micropower Networks, which have the potential - literally - to enable paraplegics to stand and to restore sight to the blind.

And just a few months ago, we adopted new rules to become the first country in the world to allocate spectrum for Medical Body Area Network, or MBAN, devices.

MBANs provide a cost-effective way to monitor patients wirelessly, providing more information to physicians and giving patients mobility and greater independence.

Soon after the MBAN announcement in June, I convened an mHealth Summit with senior executives and leaders from the health care technology industry, academia, and government to discuss the new opportunities and challenges of mobile and wireless health products.

The overarching goals of the summit were improving the quality of care, lowering costs, and saving lives through mHealth technology.

We asked the group for specific ideas on how to remove barriers to harnessing this technology for the greater good—interoperability, reliability, connectivity, privacy, and security, just to name a few.

An outcome of this convening was the creation of a Task Force by the participants to develop recommendations to accelerate the adoption of mHealth technology.

Over the summer of 2012, this independent mHealth Task Force set priorities and conducted extensive industry outreach, while adding members along the way. Throughout this process, the Co-Chairs held numerous meetings, collaborated in an online environment, and met with other experts across the sector.

The result is that today, we take another step forward with the release of the mHealth Task Force's report.

This report identifies key barriers to broader mHealth adoption and makes recommendations to the FCC, other federal agencies, and industry.

The report also proposes a bold and important national goal, which today I'm challenging public and private sector leaders to work together to achieve: make the use of mHealth technology a routine medical best practice within five years.

Furthermore, I'm proud to announce that the FCC will take the following actions to implement key recommendations in today's report:

- First, the FCC will consider an Order by the end of this year to streamline our experimental licensing rules to promote and encourage the creation of wireless health “test beds” to permit easier testing of mHealth devices.
- Second, the FCC will consider an Order by the end of this year to comprehensively reform and modernize the Rural Health Care Program, including to permit networks of hospitals and health care facilities to jointly apply for program funds in order to boost broadband capacity and enable electronic health records. The Order will also advance the Task Force's recommendation to collect richer data on broadband and telehealth to enable better targeting of program support.
- Third, I will direct the International Bureau to work with FCC counterparts in other countries to encourage them to make spectrum available for MBANs and to discuss possible spectrum harmonization to allow for medically safe cross-border patient travel and better economies of scale for device makers. This builds on discussions already begun with regulators in Europe and Mexico on these topics.
- Fourth, the FCC will develop and execute a health care stakeholder outreach plan to promote greater collaboration between the FCC and the health care sector on policies at the intersection of communications and health.

- And finally, we will recruit a permanent FCC Health Care Director, a position that functions as the central point of contact to external groups on all health-related issues.
- In addition to these important steps, I've asked my staff to review and present a plan for addressing the report's other recommendations.

I look forward to working with you to put these proposals into practice, to improve the quality of care while cutting health system costs.

Thanks again to all the members of the Task Force for your outstanding work.