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December 8, 1999

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services  
Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation  
Attention: Privacy-P  
Room G-332A, Mary E. Switzer Building  
330 C Street, SW  
Washington, DC 20201

Attention: Privacy-P

This letter is to express the City of Santa Clarita's concern about the proposed regulation governing the circumstances under which medical records information is to be maintained and disclosed. These regulations have serious implications for municipalities. While the regulation was proposed as a consumer protection measure, it will create more expensive unfunded mandates for municipalities, their law enforcement departments, public health centers, hospitals, schools, and health insurance providers.

Municipalities will incur significant direct and indirect costs associated with implementation of the new standards, which are likely to be in excess of HHS estimates.

Additionally, the complexity of the proposed regulations may limit the ability and willingness of insurers and providers to disclose information relevant to criminal investigations due to the significant civil and criminal penalties for violations.

We urge you to reconsider these proposed regulations.

Sincerely,

  
Jo Anne Darcy  
Mayor

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cc: National League of Cities



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