

On February 17, 2009, President Obama signed into law a \$789 billion dollar economic stimulus package, formally known as the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, or ARRA. Included in ARRA legislation is the Health Information Technology for Economic and Clinical Health (HITECH) Act, also known as HITECH. HITECH allocates \$19 billion to hospitals and physicians who demonstrate “meaningful use” of electronic medical records.

HITECH also provides funds for the Office of the National Coordinator for Health Information Technology (ONCHIT). Originally founded in 2004, this office oversees health information technology (HIT) standards, implementation strategies and impact assessment. ONCHIT has set goals for “the utilization of an electronic health record for each person in the United States by 2014” and the development of a nationwide health information technology infrastructure that allows for the electronic use and exchange of information.”