



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES

Office of the Secretary

April 2, 2004

Director  
Office for Civil Rights  
Washington, D.C. 20201

Mr. Donald D. Asmonga, MBA  
Director, Government Relations  
American Health Information Management  
Association  
1730 M Street, NW, Suite 409  
Washington, DC 20036

Dear Mr. Asmonga:

Thank you for your letter to the President regarding the American Health Information Management Association's (AHIMA) introduction of "National Health Information Privacy and Security Week," scheduled for April 11-17, 2004, and for your words of support for the Administration's efforts to implement and promote awareness of the important protections for the privacy and security of health information under the HIPAA Privacy and Security Rules. The White House has asked me to respond to your inquiry.

April 14, 2004, – the first anniversary of the Privacy Rule compliance date – is a significant milestone in ensuring that the privacy of individual health information is protected. AHIMA's recognition of this anniversary joins with ongoing initiatives of the Department of Health and Human Services, and particularly the Office for Civil Rights, to inform the public of the protections and rights the Privacy Rule affords and to assist covered entities in complying with the Rule.

Our outreach efforts have been significantly enhanced by associations, like AHIMA, that both understand the importance of the rights and protections of the HIPAA Privacy and Security rules, and are committed to educating covered entities and consumers.

Since its founding in 1928, AHIMA has been working to improve the quality of medical records, so it comes as no surprise that AHIMA has taken a strong leadership role in promoting awareness of the requirements and benefits of the ground breaking protections encompassed by the Privacy and Security Rules. Thank you for AHIMA's continued contributions to enhancing workable and effective protections for health information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard M. Campanelli, J.D.", written over a horizontal line.

Richard M. Campanelli, J.D.  
Director