

## Presentation of Safe Rx Award Senator Richard T. Moore

We're here today, to celebrate the national leadership of Massachusetts in e-prescribing. What is e-prescribing? At the most basic level, e-prescribing is conducted through a computer or a hand-held device which enables physicians to electronically generate and submit prescriptions directly to a pharmacist.

E-prescribing has demonstrated that it has the potential to dramatically improve patient safety, improve health outcomes, reduce preventable health care costs, and enhance the efficiency of health care delivery by streamlining the prescribing process. The use of e-prescribing presents the opportunity to avoid 2 million adverse drug events annually in America and potentially save an estimated \$27 billion a year in health care costs.

Massachusetts has been the Number One state for e-prescribing for the past two years measured by the number of prescriptions submitted electronically as a percent of the total volume of prescriptions. But, even though we're No. 1, we're only at about 14%. So we have room for improvement!

A study by the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative estimated that if 75% of Massachusetts physicians utilized e-prescribing, at least \$140 million a year could be saved in health care costs, let alone the saving in lives and quality of care.

That's why the Senate President's legislation – Senate Bill No. 2660 contains funding for e-health, and sets goals for hospitals and physicians to fully embrace health IT as the standard of care in Massachusetts.

That's why the National Governor's Association's State eHealth Alliance is recommending to the nation's governors that they take the lead in implementing e-prescribing in every state as soon as possible.

That's why the United States Senate, with leadership from our own Senator Kerry, is about to embrace a plan through Medicare to give incentives to physicians who use e-prescribing and to penalize those who fail to use this important technology.

I am proud that Massachusetts has again claimed first place among all 50 states and the District of Columbia in electronic prescribing, and we will be even more proud when we get every prescriber in Massachusetts to utilize this vital technology.