

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

December 6, 2012

Margaret Hamburg, M.D.
Commissioner, U.S. Food and Drug Administration
10903 New Hampshire Avenue
Silver Spring, Maryland 20993

RE: Kidney Health Initiative

Dear Dr. Hamburg:

We are writing to express our support for the recently signed Memorandum of Understanding between the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) and the American Society of Nephrology establishing the Kidney Health Initiative (KHI). Up to 26 million Americans live with kidney disease and more than 570,000 Americans have kidney failure. Rates of kidney disease and kidney failure are rising and will increase in concert with the rise in major underlying causes: diabetes, hypertension and obesity.

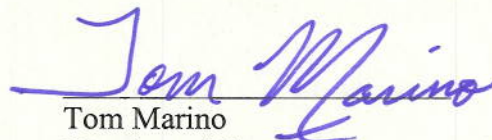
While great strides have been made in the prevention, management and treatment of other diseases, such advances in the kidney space have lagged behind. KHI will provide a forum for stakeholders in the kidney community—including patient organizations, health professionals, industry, government agencies, and innovators—to foster the development of new therapies that improve kidney health as well as advance patient safety by optimizing the evaluation of drugs, devices, biologics and food products.

As co-chairs of the Congressional Kidney Caucus we are hopeful that KHI can serve as a model for other public-private health enterprises.

Sincerely,



Jim McDermott
Member of Congress



Tom Marino
Member of Congress