Introduce legislation to provide reimbursement under Medicare and Medicaid for advance health care planning consultation and create standards to protect advance directives across states and health care providers.

Problem:
The majority of Americans have never had advance planning discussions with their health care providers. As a result, health care providers are often forced to make complex decisions for critically ill patients without adequately knowing their wishes.

Background:
- Modern health care provides a variety of treatment strategies; patient-centered care appropriately emphasizes the patients’ right to personalize their health care.
- Health care decisions are complex and every patient deserves to have a frank and open discussion with their health care provider to establish their preferences for care.
- Advance planning discussions take time, careful consideration, and coordination with family and other care providers. This can be difficult for busy practitioners burdened with patient care tasks that are not directly reimbursed.
- The health care system lacks a practical way to ensure that patients’ advance care directives are known to all hospitals and health care providers across states.

Proposed Solution:
Introduce legislation (like HR 5795, the Personalize Your Care Act of 2010) that would:
1. Amend titles XVIII (Medicare) and XIX (Medicaid) to include reimbursement for Voluntary Advance Care Planning Consultation
2. Direct the Secretary to develop standards for an electronic health record that can preserve and communicate advance directives across all health care settings
3. Protect patients’ advance directives across states lines

Conclusion: Advance health care planning is a vital component of patient-centered care, and we must protect every Americans’ right to personalize their health care.