

August 11, 2015

Senator Mazie Hirono
330 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Joni Ernst
111 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Hirono and Ernst:

The undersigned organizations are writing to express our support for the *TELEmedicine for MEDicare (TELE-MED) Act of 2015* (S. 1778). We believe this legislation will help remove barriers to the utilization of telehealth services.

Currently, the use of telehealth is artificially restricted by Medicare and different state licensure laws. Patients are forced to travel often long distances to receive care from a health professional or to forgo care altogether, when study after study demonstrates the cost saving and health improving benefits of telehealth and remote patient monitoring.

The *TELE-MED Act of 2015* is a strong step towards better access, quality, and more affordable care via telehealth by allowing Medicare physicians to treat Medicare patients regardless of location without the burden and expense of obtaining multiple state licenses. The doctor must still be licensed in the state in which he or she is located. The bill simply lifts the burden on the physician to be licensed in every state where his or her patients may be.

This structure is not new in federal programs; Congress has passed laws allowing for the same system in the Department of Defense and Department of Veterans Affairs. The results are impressive. Within the VA, home telehealth services reduced bed days of care by 59 percent and hospital admissions by 35 percent.

Like our military and veterans, Medicare patients often have complex care needs. Enacting a less burdensome program for licensure for Medicare will improve access at a lower cost.

Thank you for your leadership on this important issue. We look forward to working with you and your colleagues to pass the *TELE-MED Act of 2015*.

Sincerely,

American Association of Diabetes Educators
American Health Information Management Association
American Telemedicine Association
Anthem
Apervita
Brain Injury Association of America
College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME)
Corporate Health Care Coalition
Intel

International Association of Health Coaches
National Association of Manufacturers
National Council for Behavioral Health
National Grange
National Retail Federation
NTCA–The Rural Broadband Association
Parkinson's Action Network
Samsung
Tourette Association of America
U.S. Chamber of Commerce
United Spinal Association
Verizon