



January 12, 2021

The Honorable Joseph F. Vitale
Chair of the Senate Health, Human Services and Seniors Citizens Committee
New Jersey Senate
State House
P.O. Box 099
Trenton, NJ 08625-0099

RE: ATA Support of Senate Bill 2559

Dear Senator Vitale,

The American Telemedicine Association (ATA) applauds the New Jersey legislature for actively working to advance telehealth legislation. The ATA, the only national organization completely focused on advancing telehealth, is committed to ensuring that everyone has access to safe, affordable, and appropriate care when and where they need it, enabling the system to do more good for more people. On behalf of the ATA, and the over 400 members we represent, I am writing in general support of Senate Bill 2559.

The ATA represents a broad and inclusive network of technology solution providers, delivery systems and payers, as well as partner organizations and alliances, working together to advance adoption of telehealth, promote responsible policy, advocate for government and market normalization, and provide education and resources to help integrate virtual care into emerging value-based delivery models. Telehealth provides a pathway to improve access to health care for New Jersey residents including individuals:

- In underserved and rural areas: Individuals may not have the regular transportation or work schedules to allow them to travel long distances for quality health care, particularly specialists.
- With challenging work or family schedules: Individuals may not be able to seek care because of challenging work schedules or commitments to care for children or aging relatives.
- Who are homebound or have limited mobility: Individuals may have difficulty seeking care because of disabilities or health problems.
- Who are embarrassed or anxious in seeking care: Individuals may be intimidated or anxious in seeking in-person care. This may be particularly true for sensitive



services including family planning, behavioral health, and particular men's health services.

The ATA has a longstanding position that policies related to tech-enabled that policies related to tech-enabled healthcare delivery should be modality neutral and enable a healthcare professional to practice and efficiently and effectively as possible. The ATA agrees that a health payer shall not impose any unique conditions for coverage of healthcare services delivered via telehealth and oppose any geographic or distance-based restrictions, originating site restrictions, or restrictions on the type of telehealth technology a provider may use to deliver services. The ATA strongly supports the bill's requirements that an insurer, either public or private, may not discriminate in the reimbursement of care based on which technology modality is used by the practitioner nor based on the location of the practitioner at the time the care is delivered. These changes will increase access to care, increase the efficiency of New Jersey's health care industry, and will allow more patients to get the care they want, need, and deserve. These changes are essential for the continued growth and use of telehealth technologies and will benefit patients and practitioners alike.

Regarding the issue of reimbursement for healthcare services rendered through telehealth technologies, state policy makers should set rational guidelines that are both fair to the provider of such services and reflect the cost savings the effective use of telehealth technologies offers to the healthcare system.

Finally, as the Committee considers how to ensure that providers can use all available and appropriate telehealth technologies, we encourage the Committee to also consider revising the bill to make clear that providers can use asynchronous technologies to establish a patient relationship and deliver ongoing care. Across the country, providers are increasingly relying on asynchronous (or "store and forward") telehealth technologies to establish patient relationships, perform patient evaluations, and appropriately prescribe medication in many fields. Rather than discriminating between which technologies may be used in the delivery of care, the ATA believes there should be no restrictions on which tools can be used to deliver care as long as those tools meet the standard of care.

Again, we thank you for your support of telehealth. We encourage the Senate Health Committee to pass Senate Bill 2559 and support any further amendments that advance



patients' access to safe, appropriate, and affordable care. Particularly during a global pandemic, it is critical that New Jersey can access as many avenues as possible – within the appropriate standard of care. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can be helpful to your efforts to advance common sense telehealth policy in New Jersey. If you have any questions or would like to further discuss the telehealth industry's perspective, please contact kzebley@americantelemed.org.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kyle Zebley".

Kyle Zebley
Public Policy Director
American Telemedicine Association