



January 20, 2021

The Honorable Mark D. Sickles  
Virginia House of Delegates  
Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions  
Pocahontas Building  
900 E. Main St, Room W1312  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

The Honorable Patrick A. Hope  
Virginia House of Delegates  
Committee on Health, Welfare and Institutions  
Pocahontas Building  
900 E. Main St, Room E222  
Richmond, Virginia 23219

**RE: ATA STANCE ON ADDITIONAL AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 1987**

Dear Chairman Sickles and Subcommittee Chairman Hope,

The American Telemedicine Association (ATA) commends you and your colleagues for your efforts to establish practical telehealth policy in Virginia. I am writing you again to comment on additional amendments made to House Bill 1987 regarding clinicians' ability to prescribe medications to their patients via telemedicine.

After the ATA argued that language proposed in §54.1-3303 (B) of the bill's previous iteration would have imposed arbitrary geographic barriers that would have prevented Virginians from accessing their much-needed prescriptions, the bill was amended further. The proposed legislation now allows providers to prescribe Class II-VI prescription medications to Virginians using telemedicine provided that the prescriber "maintains a practice at a physical office location or shall make an appropriate referral with a licensed provider in the Commonwealth in order to ensure availability for an in-person examination of the patient when required by the standard of care."

While the ATA recognizes that the language offered in the most recent iteration of HB 1987 is an improvement upon that of the previous version, we take a neutral stance on the language proposed in the updated version of the bill. Regarding the topic of practitioners' ability to prescribe medications via telemedicine, the ATA encourages you and your colleagues to adopt language similar to that of Senator **George L. Barker's** proposed legislation, **Senate Bill 1338**. Such language promotes the safe, affordable, and efficient distribution of prescription



medications provided via telemedicine to citizens across Virginia without presenting additional barriers to access.

The ATA is neutral to the language proposed in the most recent iteration of House Bill 1987 and urges you and your colleagues to consider adopting language that enhances Virginians' access to health care services provided via telemedicine. Please let us know if we can do anything to assist you in your efforts to implement practical telehealth policy in the commonwealth. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the telehealth industry's perspective at greater length, please contact me at [kzebley@americantelemed.org](mailto:kzebley@americantelemed.org).

Kind regards,

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

Kyle Zebley  
Public Policy Director  
American Telemedicine Association

Cc: The Honorable Dawn Adams