



January 19, 2021

The Honorable Thomas Jay Moore
600 Mills St., PO Box 224
Griswold, IA 51535

The Honorable Steven Bradley
812 Maquoketa Dr SE
Cascade, IA 52033

The Honorable Kristin Sunde
1629 S 50th Pl.
West Des Moines, IA 50265

RE: ATA SUPPORT FOR HOUSE FILE 88

Dear Representatives Moore, Bradley, and Sunde:

Speaking for the American Telemedicine Association (ATA) and the hundreds of organizations we represent, I am writing you to encourage you and your colleagues to vote in favor of House File 88.

The ATA is the only national organization whose mission revolves solely around the advancement of telehealth in the United States. Our utmost priority is ensuring that Americans have the ability to receive affordable, first-rate health care when and where they need it. The expansion of telehealth infrastructure around the country eases strain on the overburdened health care system, enabling it to provide care for millions more patients every year in an efficient and effective manner. The ATA represents a diverse and expansive coalition of technology solution providers and payers, as well as partner organizations and alliances, working together to promote the implementation of telehealth across the country, endorse responsible telehealth policy, encourage government and market normalization, and deliver education and resources designed to further the integration of virtual care through the use of various innovative technologies.

HF88 provides an important addition to Iowa's state telehealth policy. The bill would mandate that licensing boards in the state amend their rules or adopt new language to allow a health-related professional to use telehealth or telemedicine to deliver health care services through the use of audio-only communication if the health care professional is able to meet the same standards of care as an in-person visit.

We applaud the legislature's efforts to expand allowable technology modalities to include audio-only modalities. In the context of the ongoing pandemic, it is essential that Iowans are able to access affordable, quality care even when medical offices are closed. By permitting the use of



audio-only technologies in the state, the legislature will enable patients to utilize the technologies available to them to get the care they need.

The ATA wants to emphasize its commitment to promoting technology-neutral language in telehealth-related policy. We recognize that the legislature is expanding its classification of the technology it considers appropriate for the practice of telehealth; however, the ATA urges you to consider the downsides of language that does not promote a technology-neutral telehealth environment. Regardless of the modality used to deliver care, legal frameworks should not mandate which technologies are more appropriate than others when telehealth services are being provided so long as the standard of care is met. The benefits of establishing a technology-neutral telehealth landscape include removing barriers to access for citizens in rural areas, allowing patients and practitioners to discuss diagnoses and treatments on their own time, and triaging patients with COVID-19 symptoms without requiring these individuals to come to a physical location. Without a technology-neutral definition of telehealth, Iowans will not be able to enjoy the full benefits of innovative telehealth technologies.

The ATA is confident that HF 88 will increase access to care across Iowa. Simultaneously, the bill will enhance the efficiency of Iowa's health care industry by allowing more patients to get the care they want, need, and deserve. With the passage of HF 88, Iowa will be on its way to developing a more innovation and free-market-friendly definition of telehealth. This increasingly inclusive definition will be essential for the continued growth and use of telehealth technologies in Iowa and will benefit patients and practitioners alike by creating a patient-centered health care experience.

Again, we thank you for your advocacy on telehealth. We encourage you and your colleagues to vote favorably on HF 88. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you advance common-sense telehealth policy in Iowa. If you have any questions or would like engage in additional discussions surrounding the telehealth industry's perspective, please contact me at kzebley@americantelemed.org.

Kind regards,

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

Kyle Zebley
Public Policy Director
American Telemedicine Association