



January 26, 2021

The Honorable Delores G. Kelley
Chairwoman, Maryland Senate Finance Committee
Miller Senate Office Building
11 Bladen St., 3 East Wing
Annapolis, MD 21401

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Vice-Chairman, Maryland Senate Finance Committee
James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen St., Room 104
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: ATA SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 3

Dear Chairwoman Kelley and Vice-Chairman Feldman,

On behalf of the American Telemedicine Association (ATA) and the over 400 organizations we represent, I am writing to voice my strong support for Senate Bill 3, which seeks to expand access to health care services provided via telehealth across Maryland for the state's Medicaid program.

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, high-quality health care at any place and any time. 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.



Senate Bill 3 serves as a significant addition to Maryland's state telehealth policy. The proposed legislation amends the definition of telehealth, making it more technology-neutral, and requires that insurers and health service plans reimburse health care providers for services delivered via telehealth at the same rate as if the care were provided in person.

The ATA applauds the legislature's efforts to expand Maryland Medicaid recipients' access to quality care by offering a more technologically permissive definition of telehealth. The definition is revised to include synchronous and asynchronous technologies, audio-only conversations, and remote patient monitoring services. As patients and consumers seek more convenient and affordable ways to access health care, state policies should not pick technology winners and losers in the practice of telehealth so long as the standard of care is being met. The expanded use of telehealth to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic has evidenced the usefulness of a variety of technological modalities in the delivery of virtual care, allowing practitioners to triage patients with symptoms of the disease and maintain continuous contact with those not afflicted with COVID-19.

By allowing practitioners to utilize a greater variety of technologies while delivering care, the legislature removes clinically unnecessary barriers to patients receiving high-quality care across the state. Unlike real-time, audiovisual modalities, asynchronous technologies do not require reliable access to high-speed internet connection. For the communities most affected by the persistent digital divide in Maryland, specifically underserved populations in rural and urban areas alike, permission to use an assortment of telehealth technologies ensures that they are receiving the same level of care as those with access to better internet capabilities.

As far as the rate of reimbursement for telehealth services is concerned, the ATA maintains that state policymakers should set rational guidelines that are both fair to the provider of such services and reflect the cost savings offered to the health care system by the effective use of telehealth technologies.

Again, we thank you for your strong support of telehealth. We urge you and your colleagues to pass Senate Bill 3 in the interest of expanding Maryland Medicaid recipients' easy and efficient access to quality health care. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can be helpful to your efforts to



advance common-sense telehealth policy in Maryland. If you have any questions or would like to discuss further 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