



February 8, 2021

The Honorable Tom Fabricio  
Florida House of Representatives  
402 South Monroe Street, Capitol Room 1101  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

The Honorable Mike Giallombardo  
Florida House of Representatives  
402 South Monroe Street, Capitol Room 1101  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

The Honorable Christopher Benjamin  
Florida House of Representatives  
402 South Monroe Street, Capitol Room 1301  
Tallahassee, FL 32399

**RE: ATA SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 247**

Dear Representatives Fabricio, Giallombardo, and Benjamin,

On behalf of the American Telemedicine Association (ATA) and the over 400 organizations we represent, I am writing to express our support for House Bill 247, which removes certain restrictions on the practice of telehealth in Florida.

The ATA is the only national organization completely focused on advancing telehealth. We are committed to ensuring that everyone has access to safe, affordable, and high-quality care whenever and wherever they need it. This empowers the health care system to provide services to millions more patients every year in an efficacious manner. The ATA represents a broad and inclusive coalition of technology solution providers and payers, as well as partner organizations and alliances, working to advance industry 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 modalities.

House Bill 247 serves as an important revision of Florida's state telehealth policy. The proposed legislation removes restrictions on the use of audio-only telehealth technologies in the delivery of health care services and eliminates a prohibition on prescribing controlled substances via the appropriate telehealth modalities.

The ATA applauds your efforts to expand Floridians' access to affordable, high-quality health care. Across the United States, patients and consumers are seeking more cost-effective and efficient ways to access the health care they need. State policies should not pick winners and losers in terms of the technology modalities appropriate for telehealth but should rely on licensed medical professional discretion as to which technology is sufficient to meet the standard of care for the condition presented by



the patient. Most pertinently, innovative telehealth technologies have enabled practitioners and patients to interact with each other at any place and any time from the comfort and safety of their homes throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. By eliminating restrictions on the use of audio-only telephone calls in the delivery of telehealth, the proposed legislation expands access to health care, especially for unserved and underserved communities across Florida.

The ATA also commends you for your efforts to remove a prohibition on the prescription of controlled substances via telehealth for specific treatments. In the context of the ongoing pandemic, it is essential that Floridians are able to access their much-needed prescriptions safely and efficaciously. By permitting practitioners to prescribe medications through the use of the appropriate telehealth technologies and in accordance with federal law, the legislature enables Florida residents to receive their prescriptions in an appropriate manner through telehealth.

The ATA is confident that HB 247 will increase access to care across Florida. Simultaneously, the bill will enhance the efficiency of Florida's health care industry by allowing more patients to get the care they want, need, and deserve. Florida's increasingly inclusive state telehealth policy will promote the innovation and use of telehealth technologies in the state, benefitting patients and practitioners alike by creating a patient-centered health care experience.

Again, we thank you for your advocacy on telehealth. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you advance common-sense telehealth policy in Florida. 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](mailto:kzebley@americantelemed.org).

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle Zebley", is written over a light gray circular watermark that contains the text "ATA" and "AMERICAN TELEMEDICINE ASSOCIATION".

Kyle Zebley  
Public Policy Director  
American Telemedicine Association