



January 28, 2022

The Honorable Donnie Bell
Chairman, Mississippi House Workforce Development Committee
Mississippi House of Representatives
400 High St., Room: 400-A
Jackson, MS 39215

The Honorable Kenneth Walker
Vice-Chairman, Mississippi House Workforce Development Committee
Mississippi House of Representatives
400 High St., Room: 400-F
Jackson, MS 39215

RE: ATA SUPPORT FOR HOUSE BILL 447

Dear Chairman Bell and Vice-Chairman Walker:

On behalf of ATA Action, I am writing you to express our support for House Bill 447.

ATA Action, the American Telemedicine Association's affiliated trade association focused on advocacy, advances policy to ensure all individuals have permanent access to telehealth services across the care continuum. ATA Action supports the enactment of state and federal telehealth coverage and fair payment policies to secure telehealth access for all Americans, including those in rural and underserved communities. ATA Action recognizes that telehealth and virtual care have the potential to truly transform the health care delivery system – by improving patient outcomes, enhancing safety and effectiveness of care, addressing health disparities, and reducing costs – if only allowed to flourish.

House Bill 447 serves as a rational expansion of Mississippi's state health care policy. The proposed legislation enables individuals, including health care providers, with occupational licenses in other states who apply for a license in their practice areas in Mississippi to receive a Mississippi license without having to take an examination.

ATA Action applauds the legislature for seeking to expand access to health care services by permitting providers licensed in other states to receive a license to practice in Mississippi without having to go through another rigorous examination process. Such a provision will make it substantially easier for licensed telemedicine providers to render high-quality care to Mississippi patients in an easy and efficient manner.

ATA Action believes that patients should be able to receive virtual care from their preferred provider – regardless of that provider's physical location – so long as the providers are licensed

ATA ACTION

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and in good standing in their home state, are utilizing the appropriate technology to uphold the established standard of care, and can still be held accountable by the appropriate Mississippi boards and state agencies should any issues arise from treatment of a Mississippi patient. By granting out-of-state licensees Mississippi licenses without the need for an additional examination, the Legislature will ensure that patients have the opportunity to connect with qualified practitioners whenever and wherever their need for care arises. Policies which enable out-of-state providers to practice at the top of their licenses and deliver high-quality health care via telemedicine across state lines remove arbitrary geographical barriers that limit patients' access to the health care services they want, need, and deserve.

We encourage you and your colleagues to pass House Bill 447 in the interest of expanding Mississippi patients' access to affordable, high-quality care. Please let us know if there is anything that we can do to assist you in your efforts to adopt practical telemedicine policy in Mississippi. If you have any questions or would like to engage in additional discussion regarding the telemedicine industry's perspective, please contact me at kzebley@ataaction.org.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle Zebley", is written over a light gray circular watermark.

Kyle Zebley
Executive Director
ATA Action