



Health. Virtually. Everywhere.

January 18, 2022

The Honorable Gustavo Rivera
Chair, New York Senate Health Committee
New York State Senate
172 State Street, Room 502C
Albany, NY 12247

The Honorable Patrick M. Gallivan
Ranking Member, New York Senate Health Committee
Legislative Office Building
198 State Street, Room 311
Albany, NY 12247

RE: ATA SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 5505

Dear Chair Rivera and Senator Gallivan,

On behalf of the American Telemedicine Association and the over 400 organizations we represent, I am writing to voice our support for Senate Bill 5505.

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 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.

Senate Bill 5505 represents a step forward for New York's state telehealth policy. The proposed legislation would require health care plans to cover services delivered via telehealth technologies if the services would otherwise be covered by the plans.

The ATA applauds the legislature for establishing parity in coverage for both public and private health care plans. The expanded insurance coverage proposed in the bill will make it easier for New Yorkers to receive convenient and high-quality health care services provided via telehealth without having to worry about the financial costs associated with receiving that care.

Our organization would like to comment on the provision in the bill which mandates that providers be reimbursed for telehealth services "on the same basis, at the same rate, and to the same extent" that the health care plan reimburses for the service when provided in person. 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. In some instances, reimbursement parity may be appropriate; in other instances, it may not be. We suggest including language which prohibits health care plans from requiring telehealth providers to accept



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reimbursement amounts greater than the amount providers are willing to charge. In that manner, plan enrollees and payors would retain the ability to benefit from cost savings made available by providers willing to deliver quality health care at competitive prices with innovative telehealth technologies.

We thank you for your support of telehealth in New York. We urge you and your colleagues to consider our amendments and pass Senate Bill 5505 in the interest of expanding easy and efficient access to affordable, high-quality health care across the state. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can be helpful in your efforts to advance common-sense telehealth policy in New York. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the telehealth industry's perspective further, please contact me at 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 "AMERICAN TELEMEDICINE ASSOCIATION".

Kyle Zebley
Vice President of Public Policy
American Telemedicine Association