



April 21, 2022

The Honorable Jeff Edler  
Chair, Iowa Senate Human Resources Subcommittee  
Iowa State Senate  
1007 East Grand Avenue  
Des Moines, IA 50319

**RE: ATA SUPPORT FOR HOUSE FILE 2245**

Dear Chair Edler:

On behalf of ATA Action, I am writing you to express our support for House File 2245 relating to telehealth.

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 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 File 2245 would serve as a step forward for Iowa's state telehealth policy. The proposed legislation would amend the Special Health and Accident Insurance Coverages Code to prohibit applicable health carriers from excluding out-of-state health care professionals who provide services for mental health conditions from participating as telehealth providers under a policy, plan, or contract offered by the health carrier if the professionals are licensed in Iowa and are able to satisfy the same criteria that the carriers use to qualify in-state professionals.

ATA Action supports the Legislature in its efforts to ensure that Iowans have access to high-quality, affordable mental health care services. During the COVID-19 pandemic, patients across the country benefitted from the expansion of telehealth services, receiving mental health services whenever and wherever they needed it. Innovative telehealth technologies – including real-time, audio-visual modalities and asynchronous, store-and-forward technologies – connected more patients to more providers than ever before. In the process of prompting these connections, telehealth technologies eliminated arbitrary geographic barriers between patients and their preferred providers, saved patients time and money by allowing them to receive their health care from work or at home, and enabled patients in rural and underserved communities the ability to access care easily and efficiently.

**ATA ACTION**

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With the country still suffering through an unprecedented mental health crisis, it is essential that legislatures recognize the benefits that a permissive approach to telehealth would afford patients. Prohibiting health carriers from excluding Iowa-licensed mental health care providers located outside the state from participating as telehealth providers in the health carriers' policies, plans, and contracts will reinforce Iowa's mental health care workforce and allow Iowa patients to receive care from their preferred providers regardless of those providers' physical locations.

Thank you for your support for telehealth. We urge the Legislature to approve House File 2245 in the interest of expanding Iowa patients' access to affordable, high-quality mental health care. If you have any questions or would like to engage in additional discussion regarding the telehealth industry's perspective, please contact me at [kzebley@ataaction.org](mailto:kzebley@ataaction.org).

Kind regards,

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

Kyle Zebley  
Executive Director  
ATA Action