



February 7, 2025

The Honorable Joy A. San Buenaventura
Chair, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Hawai'i State Legislature
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 213
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

The Honorable Henry J.C. Aquino
Vice Chair, Senate Committee on Health and Human Services
Hawai'i State Legislature
Hawai'i State Capitol, Room 204
415 South Beretania Street
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: ATA ACTION SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 956

Dear Chair San Buenaventura, Vice Chair Aquino and members of the Senate Committee on Health and Human Services:

On behalf of ATA Action, I am writing to you to express our support for Senate Bill 956 which allows health care providers to prescribe a three-day supply of opiates via telehealth so long as the health care provider practices in the same medical group as the prescribing physician, and the original prescribing physician has performed an in-person examination.

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.

Our organization believes that SB 956 would be a rational step forward for telehealth policy in Hawaii. SB 956 appropriately balances the need for timely patient care with responsible prescribing practices by allowing patients who have been evaluated in-person by a prescribing physician within the same medical group to receive a short-term, three-day supply of an opiate prescription via telehealth. This policy aligns with the best practices in telemedicine, ensuring that patients receive appropriate treatment while reducing unnecessary barriers to care.

Telehealth has proven to be an essential tool in modern healthcare, improving access for patients—especially those in rural and underserved communities—while maintaining high standards of care. By allowing continuity of care from within a trusted medical group, this legislation ensures patients can receive necessary short-term pain relief without undue delay, especially in urgent or post-operative scenarios. Moreover, SB 956 allows patients, especially those in rural regions which may lack treatment facilities, qualified health providers, or access to medications without the need for transportation.

ATA ACTION

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ATA Action commends the Hawai'i State Legislature for continuing to advance telehealth. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can be helpful in your efforts to advance common-sense telehealth policy in Hawaii. If you have any questions or would like to discuss further the telehealth 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 dotted rectangular background.

Kyle Zebley
Executive Director
ATA Action