



March 2, 2026

The Honorable Scot Z. Matayoshi
Chair, Consumer Protection & Commerce Committee
Hawai'i House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 433
Honolulu, HI 96813

RE: ATA ACTION SUPPORT OF HB 2558

Dear Chair Matayoshi and Members of the Consumer Protection & Commerce Committee,

On behalf of ATA Action, I am writing to express our strong support for House Bill 2558, relating to telehealth and the expansion of physician licensure flexibility for out-of-state practitioners. While we enthusiastically support the bill's direction, we also offer recommendations to further reduce restrictions and maximize access to care for Hawai'i residents.

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.

Hawai'i faces a significant and well-documented physician shortage (University of Hawai'i, 2026 Physician Workforce Assessment Report (Dec. 2025)). This shortage is felt most acutely on the neighbor islands, where geographic isolation compounds barriers to care. For patients battling cancer and other serious conditions who cannot access needed specialty services in-state, the current regulatory environment forces costly and burdensome out-of-state travel. HB 2558 takes meaningful steps to address this crisis by permitting licensed, out-of-state physicians in good standing to provide telemedicine services to Hawai'i patients under certain conditions, including supervision by a Hawaii-licensed physician.

ATA Action supports the core framework established in Section 2(b)(8) of HB 2558, which allows out-of-state physicians to establish physician-patient relationships via telehealth and deliver services not otherwise available due to physician shortage or lack of reasonable access. This is a commonsense provision that recognizes the realities of Hawai'i's healthcare landscape and leverages telehealth as the powerful access tool it is.

However, we respectfully encourage the Committee to consider making the bill's provisions less restrictive in the following ways:

Eliminate or Narrow the Supervision Requirement

As currently written, Section 2(b)(8)(D) requires that out-of-state telemedicine services be provided "under the supervision of a physician licensed in this State." For many patients seeking specialty care not

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available in Hawai‘i, there may be no in-state physician with the relevant expertise to meaningfully supervise. This requirement could effectively nullify the benefit of the provision in the very cases it is meant to address. We urge the Committee to consider removing or narrowing this requirement, or at minimum clarifying that “supervision” may be satisfied through a care coordination arrangement rather than active clinical oversight.

Broaden the Definition of Services Qualifying for the Shortage Exemption

The bill currently limits the exemption to services “not available in this State due to a physician shortage or lack of reasonable access.” ATA Action recommends adding a clear process or presumption for determining when this threshold is met, so that patients and providers are not left guessing whether a given service qualifies. Alternatively, broadening the exemption to cover any licensed, in-good-standing out-of-state physician would more fully address the access crisis and bring Hawai‘i in line with more permissive interstate telehealth frameworks.

Align with the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact’s Spirit

Hawai‘i’s adoption of the Interstate Medical Licensure Compact reflects a legislative commitment to expanding physician mobility. We encourage the Committee to ensure HB 2558’s provisions are harmonized with and complementary to Compact pathways, rather than inadvertently creating parallel, more burdensome requirements for telehealth delivery.

ATA Action believes HB 2558 represents a meaningful and necessary step forward for telehealth access in Hawai‘i. With modest adjustments to reduce unnecessary restrictions, the bill could fully unlock the promise of telehealth for the residents who need it most – including cancer patients, those managing chronic conditions, and neighbor island communities underserved by the current system.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment. We respectfully urge the Committee to support HB 2558 and to consider the modifications outlined above to maximize its impact. Please do not hesitate to let us know how we can be helpful to your efforts to advance common-sense telehealth policy in Hawai‘i. If you have any questions or would like to discuss the telehealth industry’s perspective further, please contact me at hyoung@ataaction.org.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Hunter Young" in a cursive script.

Hunter Young
Head of State Government Relations
ATA Action

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