



June 3, 2020

The Honorable Representative Thomas E. Brinkman Jr.
Insurance Committee, Chair
Re: House Bill 679

Dear Mr. Chairman and members of the committee:

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on House Bill 679 and commend you and the Committee for prioritizing telemedicine regulation amid the COVID-19 pandemic. The work Ohio has done thus far during the pandemic has already increased telehealth adoption and access to care while protecting individuals from unnecessary exposure to the virus.

As a direct-to-consumer digital health platform helping consumers obtain safe, high-quality healthcare, we are focused on working diligently with regulators and policymakers to increase access to care for as many individuals as possible, especially those living in rural or underserved areas. **Unfortunately, the initial draft of HB 679 would severely limit our and others' ability to provide Ohio residents access to healthcare services.**

Specifically, we respectfully ask you to consider amending the bill to remove the requirements that providers conduct initial "in-person" visits and use live video consultations in order to provide telehealth services. In-person and "real time" audio/video requirements impose material and unnecessary burdens on patients and providers, and could further limit care or increase public exposure in an already overwhelmed system.

Providers should always be held to the highest standard of care regardless of the mode of delivery, but allowing them to utilize asynchronous or "store-and-forward" technology to establish a provider-patient relationship and deliver care gives more patients access to providers regardless of their location or schedule. We consistently hear from both patients and providers that they prefer the efficiency, convenience and privacy of an asynchronous consultation over other formats.

Since launching in 2017, we have served over 40,000 Ohioans on our platform, and as announced last Fall, we are in the midst of construction of a pharmacy and fulfillment center in the Columbus Region that is slated to open this year and will create up to 500 new jobs. Ohio holds a special place for us, and we look forward to a long-term partnership with the State of Ohio. We share your goal of ensuring Ohioans can access high-quality, safe healthcare, and are committed to working closely with you and your staff as HB 679 moves forward in the legislative process.

Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Andrew Dudum
Hims & Hers
Founder & CEO