



**House Bill 679  
Proponent Testimony**

Gary Dougherty  
Director, State Government Affairs  
American Diabetes Association  
Senate Insurance and Financial Institutions Committee  
November 18, 2020

Chairman Hackett and Members of the Senate Insurance and Financial Institutions Committee:

My name is Gary Dougherty and I am the Director of State Government Affairs for the American Diabetes Association.

I regret that I am unable to join you today; however, on behalf of the nearly 4.3 million Ohioans with or at risk for diabetes, I want to take a few brief moments to share the support of the American Diabetes Association for House Bill 679.

Access to affordable, adequate health coverage is critically important for the diabetes community in Ohio. The need is intensified by the COVID-19 pandemic, but will endure beyond this particular health emergency.

The American Diabetes Association (ADA), the nation's leading voluntary health organization fighting to bend the curve on the diabetes epidemic and help people living with diabetes thrive, recognizes the importance of telehealth as patients seek to access health care while keeping safe and limiting their exposure and the exposure of others.

Telehealth also provides an additional method of receiving care for patients who have time and transportation barriers and for those living in rural areas.

By expanding the list of providers that can provide telehealth services to include dietitians, ensuring equivalent coverage for telehealth services, increasing flexibility for patients as well as providers, and removing barriers to uninterrupted health care, HB 679 will serve to enhance the telehealth experience in Ohio for those with diabetes.

On behalf of your constituents who are living with or at risk for diabetes and in order to keep our communities healthy, I urge you to support HB 679 so we can expand the options for Ohioans to seek care virtually.

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Thank you very much for your attention. If you have any questions, please direct them to me at [gdougherty@diabetes.org](mailto:gdougherty@diabetes.org) and I will do my best to answer them for you.

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