



**House Insurance Committee
House Bill 122 – Proponent**

On behalf of the Ohio Physical Therapy Association (OPTA), the state professional association representing physical therapists, physical therapist assistants and physical therapy students in Ohio, we would like to provide supportive comment on House Bill 122 to provide for coverage of telehealth services.

We would like to commend the State of Ohio for their swift action to expand access to telehealth at the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. We know this helped many Ohioans continue their care in the midst of a crisis. We also support efforts to make these changes permanent. Physical therapists play an integral role in providing care to patients across the lifespan. Physical therapists are critical members of the healthcare team and provide services that allow Ohioans to build strength and capacity to work to live a healthier life and help patients recover from illness and injury. We assist in getting our patients back to work and back to healthy activities.

Allowing physical therapists and physical therapist assistants to utilize telehealth services as appropriate has eliminated some significant barriers that many patients face who utilize our services on a regular basis. Patients often need to see a physical therapist multiple times per week to return to their regular daily activities. Transportation is one common obstacle patients face to get their needed treatment. Telehealth opens opportunities for patients to receive the care they need in a new way. Allowing PTs to be telehealth providers will also increase access to our services to those living in rural and underserved areas.

Overall, telehealth may be used by physical therapy patients to overcome barriers to access services caused by distance, impaired mobility, and unavailability of specialists and/or subspecialists. We are pleased that the sponsors and members of the legislature see the benefit physical therapists can provide to the telehealth population and we are happy to support this legislation.

We would also ask the committee to consider an amendment to also allow licensed physical therapist assistants to be covered under House Bill 122.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Victoria L. Gresh".

Victoria L. Gresh, CAE
Executive Director

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Tonya Apke, PT, DPT, OCS".

Tonya Apke, PT, DPT, OCS
President, OPTA