



September 21, 2021

The Honorable Stephen A. Huffman
Chair, Ohio Senate Health Committee
Ohio State Senate
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Niraj Antani
Vice Chair, Ohio Senate Health Committee
Ohio State Senate
1 Capitol Square, Ground Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

The Honorable Nickie J. Antonio
Ranking Member, Ohio Senate Health Committee
Ohio State Senate
1 Capitol Square, 2nd Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

RE: ATA SUPPORT FOR SENATE BILL 204

Dear Chair Huffman, Vice Chair Antani, and Ranking Member Antonio:

On behalf of the American Telemedicine Association (ATA) and the over 400 organizations we represent, I am writing you today to encourage you and your colleagues to vote favorably on Senate Bill 204, which would enter Ohio into the Counseling Compact.

The ATA is the only national organization completely focused on advancing telehealth, including telebehavioral health. Our members are committed to ensuring that everyone has access to safe, affordable, and high-quality health care when and where they need it. This empowers the health care system to provide more services to more patients in an efficacious manner. The ATA represents a broad and inclusive coalition of technology solution providers and payers, as well as partner organizations and alliances, working to advance industry-wide adoption of telehealth, promote responsible policy, advocate for government and market normalization, and provide the necessary education and resources to integrate emerging, value-based modalities into virtual care.

As patients and consumers seek out more convenient and affordable ways to access health care, telehealth providers have come to rely on a variety of technologies to deliver care. In joining the Counseling Compact, the legislature would afford out-of-state behavioral health care providers who are in good standing with the relevant licensing boards in their home states the opportunity to deliver their services across state lines with telehealth technologies, helping patients across Ohio connect with providers



whenever and wherever their need for care arises. Compacts such as this one help remove arbitrary geographical barriers that would limit Ohio residents' access to the behavioral health care services they want, need, and deserve. The ATA believes that patients should be able to receive virtual care from their preferred provider, regardless of that provider's physical location, so long as the providers are utilizing the appropriate technology to uphold the established standard of care and can still be held accountable by the appropriate boards and state agencies should any issues arise from treatment.

The expanded use of telebehavioral health to respond to the COVID-19 pandemic has evidenced its usefulness, allowing patients to receive care and practitioners to triage patients without leaving their homes. The ATA believes that this legislation would create a health care environment in which Ohioans could access much-needed behavioral health services as efficiently and effectively as possible without compromising the standard of care.

The ATA is confident that Senate Bill 204 will increase access to behavioral health care across the state. We applaud your efforts to streamline your constituents' access to affordable, high-quality health care, and we encourage you and your colleagues to vote favorably on this bill. Please let us know if there is anything we can do to help you promote common-sense telehealth policy in Ohio. If you have any questions or would like engage in additional discussions surrounding the telehealth industry's perspective, please contact me at kzebley@americantelemed.org.

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kyle Zebley".

Kyle Zebley
Vice President of Public Policy
American Telemedicine Association