



To: Senator Deb Patterson, Chair
Senator Tim Knopp, Vice-Chair
Members of the Senate Committee on Health Care

From: Courtni Dresser, Director of Government Relations

Date: April 26, 2021

Re: Statement of support of HB 2508A

The Oregon Medical Association is writing today, in support of HB 2508A. Our members have been using telehealth long before the COVID-19 pandemic. However, with the pandemic we have seen the importance and benefits of telehealth. It has created a larger access to health care both physical and behavioral health.

It is important for providers and patients that we continue telehealth services long after the pandemic is over. HB 2508A will provide patients and providers certainty in the services. The bill also allows the provider community to invest in telemedical services and technology with financial certainty. Our providers know when a telehealth appointment is acceptable versus when they need to see a patient in person. We do not believe this will lower the standards of care from our providers but instead create better relationships with their patients, because they can provide for them from anywhere.

The bill will allow for pay parity between an in-office visit with a video or audio visit. The bill ensures that health insurers cannot place barriers, like forcing providers to use a certain platform or that the provider must be on a certain telehealth panel. The bill also allows for continuity of care so providers can take care of patients even during a pandemic, wildfire or an ice storm, or when someone's car won't start or when they do not have childcare available.

Providers know that not all medical care can be delivered by telemedicine, but many services can and do lend themselves to be provided by telemedicine.

We want to thank Representative Rachel Prusak for her hard work and dedication to this issue. The OMA is in support of HB 2508A and urges the committee pass with full support.