

April 28th, 2021

Dear Chair Deb Patterson, Vice-Chair Knopp, and members of the Senate Committee on Healthcare,

My name is Aidan Goff and I'm a resident of Albany, Oregon. I'm writing today to testify in support of House Bill 2508, because Oregonians like me need full coverage of telehealth services. HB 2508A comprehensively updates Oregon's telehealth statutes for physical, behavioral, and oral health and outlines coverage requirements for public and private insurance. HB 2508A clarifies that telemedicine services— both audio-only and video conferencing—should be covered and reimbursed at the same scope and level as in-person visits. Over the course of the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth has proven to be an essential means of accessing healthcare that we need to expand through continued state investment.

Before the pandemic hit, I would have to drive an hour from my university in order to receive care from my established provider. Given that I am a full time student, it was difficult for me to go back and forth so often and I was putting my grades at risk. Though I had a harder time finding new care providers after the pandemic started, it is much easier for me to get care while I am at school since all I need to do is open my laptop. I know many students who have issues getting the healthcare they need in the area they are going to school and that is why we need to continue allowing people to have access to telemedicine.

Since the pandemic started, Delaware, Colorado, Vermont, Maryland, Maine, and other states have already enacted comprehensive telemedicine legislation. With HB 2508A, Oregon has the chance to join these states in passing proactive, future-looking legislation that will take crucial steps toward addressing a serious access issue impacting Oregonians across the state.

Thank you for your consideration,
Aidan Goff
Albany, Oregon