



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Gina Cella
Cella Communications
781-799-3137
gcella@cellapr.com

ATA APPLAUDS BIPARTISAN HOUSE TELEHEALTH CAUCUS CHAMPIONS FOR INTRODUCING THE PROTECTING ACCESS TO POST-COVID-19 TELEHEALTH ACT TO PERMANENTLY EXPAND USE OF TELEHEALTH

WASHINGTON, DC, JULY 16, 2020 -- The ATA (American Telemedicine Association), the premier organization working to accelerate the adoption of telehealth, applauds members of the House Telehealth Caucus for introducing the bipartisan *Protecting Access to Post-COVID-19 Telehealth Act*. The legislation, introduced today by Rep. Mike Thompson (D-CA), Rep. Peter Welch (D-VT), Rep. Bill Johnson (R-OH), Rep. David Schweikert (R-AZ), and Rep. Doris Matsui (D-CA), seeks to expand the use of telehealth beyond the current national health crisis, including permanently eliminating obsolete geographic originating site restrictions.

“During the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth has allowed our nation’s healthcare system to continue to effectively deliver needed care virtually, ensuring patients can safely access care when and where they need it. However, some of the flexibilities put in place to allow greater access to telehealth will immediately be reversed when the public health emergency expires unless Congress acts to preserve them,” said Ann Mond Johnson, CEO, the ATA. “We are grateful to the bipartisan House Telehealth Caucus champions, for their efforts to keep patients and healthcare providers from falling off the telehealth ‘cliff.’ The ATA looks forward to continuing to work with Congress to ensure that every Medicare provider is eligible to practice telehealth to the extent clinically appropriate, and patients have the choice to access telehealth post-pandemic.”

This bill includes most priorities outlined in a [bipartisan letter to Congress](#) signed by the ATA and 340 national and regional organizations last month, urging Congress to make telehealth flexibilities created during the COVID-19 pandemic permanent. These priorities included: remove geographic restrictions and allow the patient’s home as an originating site; maintain and enhance Health and Human Services’ (HHS) authority to determine appropriate telehealth services and providers; ensure Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs) and Rural Health Clinics (RHCs) can continue to furnish telehealth; and make permanent HHS’s temporary waiver authority for future emergencies.

“The health of our citizens and the integrity of our healthcare system cannot withstand telehealth services to simply “switch off” when the COVID-19 pandemic ends,” added Mond Johnson. “This legislation is an important step towards breaking down discriminatory geographic restrictions and modernizing our healthcare delivery system.”

-- more --

About the ATA

As the only organization completely focused on advancing telehealth, the [ATA](#) is committed to ensuring that everyone has access to safe, affordable, and appropriate care when and where they need it, enabling the system to do more good for more people. ATA represents a broad and inclusive member network of health care delivery systems, academic institutions, technology solution providers and payers, as well as partner organizations and alliances, working to advance industry adoption of telehealth, promote responsible policy, advocate for government and market normalization, and provide education and resources to help integrate virtual care into emerging value-based delivery models. Visit the [ATA COVID-19 Resource Center](#). @americantelemed #telehealthishealth #ATApolicy

#