

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: May have fiscal impact, statement not yet issued

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed and Be Referred to the Committee on Ways and Means by prior reference
Vote:	3 - 0 - 2
Yeas:	Carter, Gordly, Monnes Anderson
Nays:	0
Exc.:	Kruse, Morrisette
Prepared By:	Sandy Thiele-Cirka, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	2/8, 2/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Requires health insurers, and the Department of Human Services (DHS) through the state medical assistance program, to reimburse for mental health services provided by using telemedicine. Authorizes Director of Department of Consumer and Business Services to adopt rules.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Success of telemedicine in rural communities
- Medicare and Medicaid telemedicine reimbursement scenarios
- Intent of measure to assist rural Oregon communities
- Current reimbursement practices for telemedicine
- Concerns with potential increased healthcare costs
- Concerns with Department of Consumer and Business Services and Department of Human Services in the process of drafting administrative rules
- Collaborative efforts addressing telemedicine reimbursement
- Potential fiscal impact
- Proposed amendments

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Authorizes DHS to adopt rules for reimbursement rates and requirements for telemedicine relating to physical health services. Directs DHS to adopt rules for reimbursement rates and requirements for telemedicine relating to mental health services in medically underserved areas.

BACKGROUND: ‘Telemedicine’ means using telecommunications technology to deliver healthcare, including but not limited to clinical diagnosis, clinical services and patient consultation. Comprehensive reimbursement policies are often inconsistent and fragmented and are often cited as one of the obstacles to total integration of telemedicine into health care practices. The Balanced Budget Act (BBA, 1997) authorized partial Medicare reimbursement for telehealth services.