



April 24, 2015

The Honorable Mitch Greenlick
Chair, House Committee on Health Care
State Capitol
Salem, Oregon 97301

RE: Senate Bill 144, Telehealth reimbursement

Dear Representative Greenlick and members of the committee:

Providence Health & Services is actively pursuing innovative ways to improve health care access and affordability in the communities we serve. Telehealth services are an important part of this strategy and we support efforts to expand reimbursement in a manner that is beneficial for patients and consistent with health care transformation – as proposed in Senate Bill 144.

Over the past year, Providence participated on an interim work group initiated by Senator Laurie Monnes Anderson and convened by the Telehealth Alliance of Oregon. The product of this work is Senate Bill 144, a consensus bill that removes certain barriers established in current law and provides a reasonable framework for expanding telehealth reimbursement by:

- Eliminating current requirements that a patient be located in a rural, clinical setting in order for a provider to be reimbursed for telehealth services.
- Ensuring opportunity for savings or the adoption of alternative payment methods for telehealth services by allowing providers and insurers to negotiate appropriate rates – not mandating payment parity.

The bill also addresses the most significant concern raised by Providence during previous sessions – protection of patient safety and privacy. As a condition of reimbursement, Senate Bill 144 requires the technology used to provide telehealth services meet all standards required by state and federal laws governing privacy and security of protected health information.

Providence is proud of the collaboration that took place in the interim, across a broad group of stakeholders, and hope you'll join us in support of Senate Bill 144.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Theron Park", written over a light blue horizontal line.

Theron Park
Chief Executive, Delivery System
Providence Health & Services - Oregon