

I am writing in support of HB 2508. I manage a large primary care organization with more than 25,000 active patients and more than 20 providers. During the Covid pandemic, payors, providers and patients had to quickly pivot to accommodate the need to isolate whenever possible. It worked! It reinforced for all of us that there is a definite need for this type of service and it has been essential during this pandemic. However, we've always known there was a need. It was underutilized because there was no, or reduced, reimbursement for it. Even in "normal" times, there are many instances when a patient will receive no care at all if a remote telehealth visit is not allowed. This can lead to an exacerbation of their illness or chronic condition or worse. It often increases the cost of care for that patient because their condition has become more serious before it is treated. It is my opinion that telehealth visits do not substitute completely for in person visits, at least in primary care, but are a necessary adjunct to it in many circumstances. We are all working diligently to fix what is broken in our healthcare system and this is a very important component toward this goal.