

April 21, 2023

Dear Sen. Blanco, Sen. LaMantia, and Rep. Hernandez,

Re: Our Opposition to Telehealth Payment Parity Mandates

Thank you for your leadership on health care policy, specifically your desire to help telehealth flourish in our state. As you know, telehealth is making health care more accessible in Texas, especially in rural areas.

However, we are concerned that your well-intended legislation to strengthen telehealth practices in Texas may actually do the opposite. ([SB 724/](#)[HB 1726/](#)[SB 1043](#))

Mandatory payment parity for telehealth denies families the enormous savings telehealth offers by mandating insurers pay artificially higher prices for these essential services. One of the primary advantages of telehealth is that it is a cheaper, more affordable option than an office visit.

Texas already has a strong supply and demand for telehealth services that allows for competitive negotiated private market rates. Payment parity mandates tie telehealth services to more expensive services, thus creating an artificial floor and higher negotiated payments than would occur without the mandate.

Telemedicine has continued to thrive and remain cost-effective in states that do not have parity laws. Other research found that such mandates could actually create higher costs and greater hesitance in widespread adoption.

Part of the promise of telehealth is that it can reduce costs. For example, when care is provided remotely, providers don't have to clean exam rooms, waiting rooms, and other spaces. Reimbursement should reflect these savings.

We ask you to reconsider mandatory payment parity for telehealth visits and to support policies that promote innovation, competition, and affordability in telehealth services.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

