



July 27, 2017

The Honorable Aaron Michlewitz
House Chair
Joint Committee on Financial Services
24 Beacon Street
Room 254
Boston, MA 02133

Dear Chairman Michlewitz:

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the Massachusetts Osteopathic Society (MOS) are writing in support of HB 2179. This bill requires insurance coverage for health care services provided through telemedicine at the same rate as services provided in person. The AOA and MOS support the delivery of appropriate health care services utilizing online technology, online consultations and internet-based health programs, as well as coverage for such services by government and other third-party payers.

The AOA represents nearly 130,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and osteopathic medical students, promotes public health, encourages scientific research, serves as the primary certifying body for DOs and is the accrediting agency for osteopathic medical schools. More information on DOs/osteopathic medicine can be found at www.osteopathic.org. MOS is a professional medical organization that represents over 1,000 DOs providing patient care in Massachusetts.

Benefits of telemedicine:

- The practice of medicine via electronic and technological means has been occurring for decades. As technology advances and the breadth of medical practice in this area expands, there is an increasing need to support the appropriate delivery of health care through technological resources.
- Telemedicine provides improved access to medical care and services to patients in rural or distant areas and allows for easier access to care for immobile patients and those with limited mobility.
- Cost-effectiveness, through reduced travel times, is an additional benefit of delivering health care services through telemedicine.

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Providing payment parity for telemedicine services delivered to patients in Massachusetts will ease access to health care for all individuals and allow low-income patients in rural and remote areas, and those with limited mobility, to receive the care they need. The AOA and MOS request that you **support HB 2179**. Should you need any additional information, please feel free to contact Nick Schilligo, MS, Vice President, Public Policy at nschilligo@osteopathic.org or (800) 621-1773, ext. 8185.

Sincerely,



Mark A. Baker, DO
President, AOA



William Foley, DO, MSc
President, MOS

CC: William S. Mayo, DO, AOA President-elect
Joseph M. Yasso, Jr., DO, Chair, AOA Department of Governmental Affairs
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