



AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ASSOCIATION
TREATING OUR FAMILY AND YOURS



April 4, 2017

The Honorable Rod Whittemore
Chairman
Maine State Joint Insurance and Financial Services Committee
P.O. Box 96
Skowhegan, ME 04976

Dear Chairman Whittemore:

The American Osteopathic Association (AOA) and the Maine Osteopathic Association (MOA) are writing to urge you to support LD 949. This bill requires payment for health care services provided through telemedicine at the same rate as services provided in person. The AOA and MOA support the delivery of health care services utilizing online technology, online consultations and internet-based health programs, when those services can be delivered without diminishing the quality of care or jeopardizing the standard of care. When these criteria are met, we support coverage and payment for such services by government and 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. MOA is a professional medical organization that represents approximately 400 DOs and an additional 500 residents and students providing patient care in Maine.

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.

Providing payment parity for telemedicine services delivered to patients in Maine 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 MOA request that you **support LD 949**. Should you or your staff have any questions, please contact Nick Schilligo, AOA's Associate Vice President for State Government Affairs, at nschilligo@osteopathic.org or (312) 202-8185.

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Sincerely,



Boyd R. Buser, DO
President, AOA



Merideth Norris, DO, FACOFP
President, MOA

CC: Mark A. Baker, DO, AOA President-elect
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