



## **SENATE COMMERCE COMMITTEE**

**February 4, 2020**

### **SB 555 - Relative to Telemedicine Coverage and Reimbursements**

#### **Testimony**

Good afternoon, Chairman and members of the committee. My name is Paula Minnehan, Senior VP, State Government Relations with the New Hampshire Hospital Association (NHHA), representing all 26 of the state's community hospitals as well as all specialty hospitals.

The NHHA is in strong support of SB 555 and we want to thank the sponsor, Senator Kahn, for introducing this bill to support telemedicine in our state. While this bill is very important, it is also relatively straight-forward. It ensures that the Medicaid program and group health insurers recognize, from a coverage and reimbursement perspective, services provided through telemedicine on the same basis they recognize health care services that are delivered in person. It is a telehealth parity bill. We believe all efforts to encourage and promote telemedicine in New Hampshire is necessary and warranted to ensure continued access to care for our citizens.

When the legislature passed a bill in 2018 to convene a study committee on telehealth, there was a lot of testimony and support for the technology and the application of telemedicine in New Hampshire. What we also learned during the study committee meetings is one of the major barriers to further expansion of telemedicine are the limitations with adequate reimbursement. This bill is aimed at addressing this barrier.

Telemedicine is a cost-effective, and innovative way to provide needed care to patients throughout the state of New Hampshire, especially to rural areas of the state. It is also a very important alternative for elderly patients that are unable to travel to a doctor's office for care. In addition, with the continued health care workforce shortage we are experiencing in our state, delivery of care via telemedicine is an excellent approach to address this concern.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments and we hope you will support this bill. I am happy to answer any questions.