



February 20, 2023

The Honorable Melony Griffith  
Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
Maryland General Assembly  
3 East  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

The Honorable Katherine Klausmeier  
Vice Chair, Senate Finance Committee  
Maryland General Assembly  
3 East  
Miller Senate Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**RE: ATA ACTION SUPPORT OF SB 534**

Dear Ms. Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier and members of the Maryland Senate Finance Committee:

On behalf of ATA Action, I am writing you to comment and express our support for Senate Bill 534.

ATA Action, the American Telemedicine Association's affiliated trade association focused on advocacy, advances policy to ensure all individuals have permanent access to telehealth services across the care continuum. ATA Action supports the enactment of state and federal telehealth policies to secure telehealth access for all Americans, including those in rural and underserved communities. ATA Action recognizes that telehealth and virtual care have the potential to truly transform the health care delivery system – by improving patient outcomes, enhancing safety and effectiveness of care, addressing health disparities, and reducing costs – if only allowed to flourish.

SB 534 will protect an important step forward for Maryland's telehealth policy. The bill extends the time frame in which certain audio-only telephone conversations are included under the definition of telehealth for coverage and reimbursement purposes. This will ensure that patients who have come to rely on audio-only modalities of healthcare will not have their care interrupted and continues extended access to high-quality healthcare for all Maryland patients.

ATA Action supports the adoption of technology-neutral telemedicine policies that enable practitioners to utilize synchronous, (real-time) audio-visual or audio-only, and asynchronous (non-real-time) technologies in the delivery of care. ATA Action maintains that policy makers should not restrict the modalities which practitioners may use when providing care to patients, permitting licensed health care professionals to determine which technologies are sufficient to meet the standard of care for the condition presented by the patient. ATA Action is pleased to see the extension for the use of audio-only care and

**ATA ACTION**

901 N. Glebe Road, Ste 850 | Arlington, VA 22203  
Info@ataaction.org



Telehealth Policy to Transform Healthcare

urges the General Assembly to permanently include audio-only modalities in the definition of telehealth. This will be especially beneficial for citizens without reliable internet access, due to broadband or personal technological limitations.

As far as the rate of reimbursement for telehealth services is concerned, ATA Action maintains that state policymakers should set rational guidelines that are both fair to the provider of such services and reflect the cost savings offered to the health care system by the effective use of telehealth technologies.

Thank you for your support for telehealth. We encourage you and your colleagues to support this legislation and consider other actions that will permanently expand access to telehealth care in Maryland. Please let us know if there is anything that we can do to assist you in your efforts to adopt practical telehealth policy in Maryland. If you have any questions or would like to engage in additional discussion regarding the telehealth industry's perspective, please contact me at [kzebley@ataaction.org](mailto:kzebley@ataaction.org).

Kind regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kyle Zebley".

Kyle Zebley  
Executive Director  
ATA Action

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