



Testimony Senate Bill 372
March 18, 2025
Health and Government Operations Committee
Support

Chair Pena-Melnyk, Vice-Chair Cullison and Members of the House Health and Government Operations Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on Senate Bill 372 – Preserve Telehealth Access Act of 2025. The American Lung Association strongly supports this bill.

The American Lung Association is the oldest voluntary public health association in the United States, currently representing the 32.5 million Americans living with lung diseases including asthma, lung cancer and COPD, including 842,000 Maryland residents. The Lung Association is the leading organization working to save lives by improving lung health and preventing lung disease through research, education and advocacy.

The Lung Association believes that everyone should have affordable, accessible and adequate healthcare coverage. Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth has emerged as vital way for patients to safely access care. In August of 2020, the Lung Association and its partners agreed to [principles on telehealth](#). Senate Bill 372 aligns with these principles as it expands telehealth services and makes the flexibilities permitted during the COVID19 pandemic permanent practice in Maryland.

Telehealth has been an important delivery method for improving access to care in underserved communities and in particular rural areas, those with physician shortages and areas with limited access to primary care services. The COVID-19 pandemic placed a spotlight on the role of telehealth allowing many high-risk patients to continue to receive timely and safe care and treatment while maintaining their safety. While many of the flexibilities in telehealth policy have been time-limited, the American Lung Association strongly believes that all patients should have continued safe access to appropriate telehealth services now that the COVID-19 pandemic is over, as it will help reduce gaps in care.

Senate Bill 372 allows for permanency in a number of strong telehealth policy measures including improving access through easing technology barriers by permitting audio-only communication which is critical for rural and low-income populations which might lack broadband internet access. The bill also makes permanent requirements that insurance companies reimburse at parity for in-person visits. This can help address shortages of specialist providers in a geographically convenient area.

The American Lung Association believes that telehealth is a critical piece of access to care for many patients and will continue to ensure that patients have timely and safe health care services and treatments. We applaud the legislature for addressing these needs during the midst of the pandemic and appreciate the willingness to allow these flexibilities to remain permanent now that the pandemic is over. We would encourage a favorable vote from the House Health and Government Operations Committee and encourage swift passage by the Maryland General Assembly.

We thank you for the opportunity to provide comments and if you need any additional information, please do not hesitate to contact Aleks Casper, Director of Advocacy at aleks.casper@lung.org or 202-719-2810.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Aleks Casper".

Aleks Casper
Director of Advocacy
American Lung Association

