

House Health and Human Services Committee

February 16, 2017

Proponent Testimony – HB 2206

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony regarding to HB 2206.

As a representative and the Legislative Chair for Kansas Physical Therapy Association, we are in full support of HB 2206. Senator Jim Kelly solicited our comments on this legislation prior to this introduction and we were able to provide feedback and we appreciate the opportunity to speak on behalf of this bill.

The American Physical Therapy Association's (APTA) Board of Directors has defined telehealth in that it "encompasses a variety of health care and health promotion activities, including, but not limited to, education, advice, reminders, interventions, and monitoring of interventions". (APTA: Telehealth; Amended BOD G03-03-07-12) According to the APTA, more than 25 states have passed similar parity legislation as this telehealth bill.

Physical therapy has been successful in providing telehealth services in the Veterans' Administration for some time now across the country. Telehealth has also been utilized in rural areas, where a PT is not within driving distance and can provide education and intervention to assist a patient in their plan of care. Utilizing expertise in certain interventions, telehealth can provide effective treatment for patients where a therapist who is experienced in a certain type of intervention, post-operative arthroplasty care, for example, can provide education and intervention without having to be on-site. The APTA and physical therapists have been doing much research in this area to provide the best care for our population.

Telehealth is an extension of what physical therapists already do and we feel that this bill will allow patients to have improved access to physical therapists and other health care providers.

In summary, telehealth is the future of health care and will be able to provide much needed care for the residents of Kansas. Physical therapists, as well as other providers, in Kansas are already providing care to our residents and this bill will allow us to reach more residents and provide more readily available access to needed health care providers.

Thank you for our time and for your consideration of HB 2206.

Sincerely,

Jennifer Westerberg, PT, DPT

KPTA, Legislative Chair