



Arizona State Senate

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE



Legislators Seek Telemedicine Parity Across Arizona

(Phoenix, State Capitol) ---- Telemedicine has brought healthcare into the 21st century, and with the introduction of new legislation, those services are poised to expand throughout Arizona.

SB 1089, introduced by sponsor Senator Heather Carter, Senator Kate Brophy McGee, Representative Nancy Barto and others, seeks to expand access to telemedicine services across Arizona. Currently, Arizona law only requires commercial health insurers to cover ten specialties such as pulmonology and dermatology. With the proposed legislation, any health care service covered in-person by a commercial insurer will also be covered when provided through telemedicine.

“Telemedicine, in the limited areas where it’s been used, has profoundly impacted the health of patients and communities,” said Senator Carter. “Telemedicine technology has advanced to the point where clinically effective treatment can be provided via telemedicine for hundreds of medical services.”

“Telemedicine is a priority for many communities, especially those in rural areas facing access to care obstacles and physician shortages. Increasing access to telemedicine will help improve patient safety and the health of Arizonans.”

Telemedicine – or telehealth – is the process by which patients can receive medical information and care through various electronic means from a remote practitioner, making medical and clinical expertise more convenient and accessible than ever before. SB 1089 will continue to expand the functionality of these programs and access to medical care for all Arizonans.

Telemedicine coverage of all health services by commercial insurers, known as ‘full telemedicine parity’, exists in at least 23 other states and Washington, D.C. and helps to bring critical health care resources to more communities. It also serves to address healthcare workforce shortages throughout our state by making providers available through virtual means to provide consultation, exams, and training.

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