



# **ERIC The ERISA Industry Committee**

***Driven By and For Large Employers***

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## **WRITTEN TESTIMONY ON BEHALF OF THE ERISA INDUSTRY COMMITTEE (ERIC) REGARDING HOUSE BILL 2206**

### **BEFORE THE HOUSE COMMITTEE ON HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES**

February 16, 2017

The ERISA Industry Committee (ERIC) represents large employers, many with employees and retirees in Kansas, with the goal of ensuring telehealth benefits are accessible for millions of workers, retirees, and their families. ERIC speaks in one voice for our members – the country’s largest employers – on their benefit and compensation interests.

As plan sponsors, our members strive to provide the best health care possible to their employees, retirees, and families at affordable costs. At ERIC, we seek to enhance our members’ ability to provide high-quality, affordable health care. We recognize the significant opportunity provided by telehealth to modernize health care delivery and improve access to quality medical care.

ERIC members want their employees to have the care they need – when and how they need it. Telehealth provides many unique benefits that are appreciated by employees, retirees, and their families because it:

- Increases access to medical care, with the needed flexibility to receive care 24-hours a day, seven days a week;
- Provides access to care for rural and urban underserved populations, retirees, the elderly, disabled employees, and those with language barriers, chronic conditions, or transportation barriers that may otherwise not have access to care;
- Minimizes the time spent attending to health care needs, while ensuring access to health care professionals at times and locations that are convenient; and
- Allows access to health care that is provided at an affordable, cost-effective rate.

ERIC is pleased that the Kansas legislature is considering ways to increase access to needed health care by endorsing telehealth. However, we are concerned that the suggested bill language in New Section 1(b)(2) of House Bill 2206 (HB 2206), that would require reimbursement coverage at least at the same rate as in-person coverage will unnecessarily limit the benefits of telehealth by restricting reimbursement flexibility and potentially driving up the cost of telehealth.

For these reasons, ERIC urges the Committee to strike New Section 1(b)(2) of HB 2206 if it chooses to advance this legislation out of Committee.

***ERIC is the only national association that advocates exclusively for large employers on health, retirement, and compensation public policies at the federal, state, and local levels.***

Thank you for considering large employers' interests as you consider telehealth legislation. We welcome the opportunity to serve as a resource to the Committee as it considers legislation and the importance of telehealth to large employers.