

February 24, 2021

Honorable Cynthia Roe  
Chair  
Public Health Committee  
Oklahoma House of Representatives  
2300 N Lincoln Blvd.,  
Oklahoma City, OK 73105

Dear Chair Roe,

On behalf of The ERISA Industry Committee (ERIC), thank you for accepting comments from interested stakeholders as the Committee considers House Bill 1689. 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. We speak in one voice for our member companies on their benefit and compensation interests, including many with employees and retirees in Oklahoma. **ERIC supports and recommends passage of HB 1689**, with minor modifications.

As plan sponsors, our member companies strive to provide the best health care coverage possible to their employees, retirees, and families at an affordable cost. ERIC recognizes the significant opportunity telemedicine has to modernize health care delivery and improve access to quality medical care for workers and their dependents. Telemedicine minimizes the time spent attending a health care provider visit, making telehealth a great value to working parents, caregivers, and others struggling to balance work and family demands. It also provides access to care for rural and urban underserved populations, retirees, the elderly, disabled employees, those with language barriers, chronic conditions, or transportation barriers who may otherwise not have access to care.

ERIC encourages state policies that incorporate technology-neutral requirements in telemedicine legislation and regulations because restrictive requirements create a barrier to access. We thank the bill sponsor for including technology-neutral requirements. Allowing Oklahoma residents to use telephone audio-only, electronic mail, text message, instant messaging conversation, adaptive website questionnaires, nonsecure and secure video conference communication for telehealth consultations will greatly expand access to telehealth services for residents who lack the capability to communicate with a provider via video.

However, two recommendations we ask the Committee to consider include:

- Section 2.18 & Section 3.2: **Remove** the use of “real-time” language, as this restricts the ability to use remote patient monitoring
- Section 2.18 & Section 3.2: **Include** “HIPAA” compliant text and email

Thank you for accepting our input on HB 1689. **ERIC urges the Committee to vote YES on HB 1689.** ERIC is pleased to represent large employers with the goal of ensuring telemedicine benefits are accessible for millions of workers, retirees, and their families. If you have any questions concerning our written testimony, or if we can be of further assistance, please contact me at [sbelmont@eric.org](mailto:sbelmont@eric.org) or 202-627-1914.

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