



Testimony of James P. Leahy, CAE
In support of
Increasing Access to Telehealth Services
(Draft LCO 3614 AAC Telehealth)
on
July 21, 2020

Chairperson Lesser, Chairperson Scanlon and members of the Joint Committee on Insurance and Real Estate, my name is Jim Leahy and I am the Executive Director of APTA Connecticut, a Chapter of the American Physical Therapy Association. We thank you for bringing this bill forward and support its passage in this special session.

Telehealth was already moving forward as a way to provide health care services in a number of areas where people were underserved. As a result of Covid-19, Telehealth may very well be here to stay. At a time when our hospital facilities were stressed and venturing out in public put people at risk, the Governor's Executive Order allowed patients to get access to critical care without having to leave their homes.

From the economic side, this policy allowed a number of practices, particularly private practice clinics, to keep their doors open. While Covid-19 hammered the economy and many practices saw sharp reductions in their revenues, some were clearly kept in business with Telehealth. The mandate that telehealth visits be paid as if they were in office visits was instrumental to the success of the program.

We appreciate the opportunity to comment on the bill and look forward to an even more robust debate in the 2021 session of the CT General Assembly