

**Telehealth
Bill No. LCO No. 3614
Testimony Submitted to the General Assembly
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Town: Thompson, Connecticut

Senator Lesser, Representative Scanlon, Senator Kelly, Representative Pavalock-D'Amato, and distinguished members of the Insurance and Real Estate Committee: My name Tina Lekacos, and I am a Behavioral Health Clinician for Generations Family Health Center. Generations is a Federally Qualified Community Health Center that provides medical, dental, behavioral health and support services in eastern Connecticut.

Telehealth has helped many of my patients over the past five months. One patient is in her thirties and is a single mother of two school-age children; one child has serious medical issues. The patient lives on SSD and SNAP. In addition, she has an elderly mother who lives in Massachusetts and is very ill, which is another stress/worry for the patient. She struggles with depression and past childhood abuse. She has very limited supports as her family lives out of state. She has no car. In the past she has used the transit bus when her children were in school; and during the summertime she asked a neighbor to watch her children (in exchange for the patient cleaning the neighbor's apartment) and took the transit bus to get to appointments. She has told me in sessions that telehealth is extremely helpful in keeping her depression low, feeling she is not alone; and with her children home from school, she feels without telehealth she would have had "a nervous breakdown" and been admitted to an in-patient psych unit resulting in her two children being placed in foster care.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. Patients like the one mentioned above need to have access to telehealth care so that we can help them.