



AMERICAN ACADEMY OF
ORTHOPAEDIC SURGEONS

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October 15, 2021

The Honorable Mikie Sherrill
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David McKinley
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Sherrill and McKinley,

On behalf of the American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons (AAOS), I wish to express our support for H.R. 2168 the "Expanded Telehealth Access Act." We applaud your efforts to increase patient access to crucial telehealth services by allowing Medicare to reimburse physical therapists, occupational therapists, speech-language pathologists, and audiologists for the telehealth services they provide- something that is already allowed during the COVID-19 public health emergency (PHE).

Policy changes enacted to temporarily remove many barriers to access for telemedicine during the PHE led to significant growth in the use of telehealth services in patient and medical communities. Unfortunately, these policies are set to expire at the end of the PHE. AAOS believes that many of the temporary telehealth waivers granted by the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services during the PHE should be permanently codified into law, including the removal of any location or geographic-site restrictions, reimbursement payment-parity within Medicare, the allowance of audio-only visits within Medicare, and the 60% increase in the number of telehealth services covered by Medicare.

Continued access to telehealth services is a critical component for a significant number of patients, especially for patients of limited means for whom traveling to a physical location for an appointment is an unnecessary burden. I thank you for your leadership and introduction of the Expanded Telehealth Access Act. AAOS appreciates and recognizes your substantial efforts to advance this critical policy.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "David McKinley".

Daniel K. Guy, MD, FAAOS
President, American Association of Orthopaedic Surgeons

cc: Felix H. Savoie, III, MD, FAAOS, AAOS First Vice-President
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