



AMERICANS FOR PROSPERITY®

WEST VIRGINIA

1/20/2020

Dear **Lawmaker**:

On behalf of Americans for Prosperity activists across West Virginia, **I urge you to remove unaffordable payment mandates for telemedicine, known as payment parity, from House Bill 4003.** Votes to remove such language from HB 4003 may be recorded in our 2020 session legislative scorecard.

The payment parity provision within HB 4003 would mandate the rate at which insurers pay health care practitioners who deliver telemedicine. This rate would be at least 90 percent of the rate as in-person services. Instead of allowing natural market signals to dictate prices, payment parity is a corporate crony scheme that would significantly increase the cost of telemedicine services and pass these costs on to patients through copays, premiums and deductibles.

Americans For Prosperity is a strong supporter of expanding patient access to affordable telemedicine care. Unfortunately, unless payment parity is removed from HB 4003, the legislation only serves to deny families the enormous savings telemedicine offers by mandating insurers pay artificially higher prices for these essential services. As such, we will oppose any version of the bill that includes payment parity.

It is for these reasons that I ask you to remove all payment parity language from HB 4003 and oppose the concept of payment parity in any legislation.

There are several ways in which HB 4003 can be improved upon:

- Remove the payment parity provision
- Fully empower Advanced Practice Registered Nurses (APRNs), Physician Assistants (PAs) and other highly qualified health care providers to deliver telemedicine and telehealth, respectively, by clarifying their ability to both engage in and bill for the practice in code
- Retain language that broadly defines originating sites in order to provide wider access to telemedicine
- Allow Medicaid to cover a wide variety of telemedicine care—including remote patient monitoring, store-and-forward services, and remote consultations—in order to lower costs and increase access

Sincerely,

Jason Huffman
West Virginia State Director
Americans for Prosperity