



TELADOC WRITTEN TESTIMONY FOR KANSAS HB 2674

February 12, 2018

Claudia Duck Tucker | Vice President of Government Relations | Teladoc

Mr. Chairman and members of the House Health and Human Services Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide written testimony in support of HB 2674. I am Claudia Tucker, Vice President of Government Affairs for Teladoc. Teladoc is the nation's oldest and largest telemedicine company. We have over 20 million members and a network of more than 3100 physicians, all of whom are board-certified and who possess, on average, 15 years of experience in the practice of medicine. Teladoc operates in all 50 states plus the District of Columbia.

There are four major companies in the primary care telemedicine market. Of all the telemedicine visits done in the U.S. in 2016, Teladoc completed 70% of them, making us the largest telemedicine company by far. We have delivered over 2.5 million remote visits in the United States. This milestone was hit without a single malpractice claim. Telemedicine is booming because, while not a silver bullet, it's the sharpest tool in the tool bag of employers, health plans, state employee systems and others to reduce costs and improve access.

Teladoc works with legislators and regulators in all 50 states to help them understand the technology, what is possible in telemedicine, what makes good public policy and what are potential unintended consequences of new policy proposals. Although, we appeared here last year around this time and then again this summer in front of the interim committee and then last week on HB 2512, I want to remind you of who we are and how we do what we do because I think that background is important as we continue to discuss telemedicine and HB 2674.

Teladoc operates in the primary care space. By that, I mean simple non-emergent illnesses like sinusitis, bronchitis, the flu and urinary tract infections. In addition to the primary care space, we have recently launched our behavioral health, dermatology and smoking cessation platforms. Last July we acquired Best Doctors, a Boston based company which has extended the scope for Teladoc; we now cover not just non-emergent illnesses but the most complex and complicated of conditions that require a second opinion from some of the best doctors in the world. For this conversation, let's talk about the primary care.

Good public policy for telemedicine will involve three things:

- the recognition that a physician-patient relationship can be established using telemedicine (this was included in the Federation of State Medical Boards model policy in 2014);
- that the standard of care be the same for telemedicine as it is for traditional medicine and
- that the systems used must be technology neutral



TELADOC.

As relevant to Kansas, these guiding principles mean that a Kansas licensed physician, when meeting the standard of care, can prescribe appropriate medications, excluding controlled substances. Teladoc is NOT direct to consumer and is a sponsored benefit thru employers, health plans, associations, unions and other. We know that technology and healthcare innovation moves much faster than the legislative and regulatory process. We don't know what technology will be available next year, much less 5 years from now. As long as the standard of care for the physician is the same – we certainly don't want telemedicine to be of lesser quality nor do we want the standard to be higher and which will install artificial barriers where they are not needed – we have built the foundation for a safe and quality-driven telemedicine environment.

As I said, our doctors are licensed and board certified in the state where the patient is located. They are ER docs, family docs, internists and pediatricians. Please know that OUR docs are YOUR docs. We have a waiting list in every state of docs who want to join our network, because it allows them to work when and where they want, eliminates all the overhead and paperwork, and Teladoc covers their insurance.

Teladoc covers over 200K lives in Kansas. We have saved Kansans and the Kansas healthcare system \$6.25 million in 2017, and that number will grow in 2018; we conducted 13,316 telemedicine consults in Kansas in 2017. The Cities of Wichita, Hutchinson, Ottawa and Augusta are Teladoc clients, as are Garden City Public Schools, Fort Scott and Wichita Public Schools. Other clients include Nueterra Healthcare, Kansas Turnpike Association, Riley County Police Department and nursing homes in the state. We also recently began providing telemedicine services for the employees of the state of Kansas who select a health plan through Aetna.

The bill before you represents a compromise by several interested parties. We tried to create a bill that is fair, affordable and clear. Is it everything we all want? Probably not, but what it does do is provide clarity about prescribing via telemedicine and clearly defines how the physician-patient relationship is established. By deliberately defining what is required to establish that physician-patient relationship, you have put the guardrails in place that will ensure high-quality telemedicine services and remove the concerns regarding "pill mills" and other illegal activities that may currently be taking place.

HB 2674 makes a few changes requested by conferees, but otherwise is the same compromise language and we urge you to support HB 2674 as it is presented before you today. Thank you for taking the time to consider this important issue.