



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF **HB 2206**

February 9, 2021

Chairwoman Landwehr and Members of the House Health Committee,

The Kansas Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (KAAP) represents more than 400 of the practicing pediatricians in the state. The KAAP has the fundamental goal that all children and adolescents in Kansas have the opportunity to grow safe and strong. It is with this goal in mind that we want to share our testimony in favor of the proposed **HB 2206** that would allow for continued expansion of telemedicine in Kansas.

Kansas pediatricians responded to the COVID-19 crisis by making many changes to their practices to keep their patients safe while continuing to provide high quality health care. Vaccinations were given in parking lots, schedules were changed, and pediatricians used telemedicine when appropriate to provide care in the safety of the patient's home.

Research conducted by the University of Kansas School of Medicine shows that with a significant increase in telemedicine use from 2019 to 2020, physicians and other licensed health care providers as well as patients benefited from expanded use of telehealth services during COVID-19. **HB2206** allows pediatricians and other health care providers to continue to offer telemedicine to patients resulting in improved access to care, increasing continuity of care, and decreasing the burden on families who have to take time away from work or other activities to visit the doctor in person.

We support House Bill 2206 because it is beneficial to the children and families we serve. We support any effort to expand the bill to address a couple of critical issues we recognize based on our recent experience.

- We value the greater access to care that comes with telemedicine, but we also strongly seek to keep telemedicine connected to the primary care physician or health system that functions as a patient's medical home. To that end we support any efforts to ensure that payers cannot mandate or incentivize mandatory use of a telemedicine service provider. This will optimize continuity of care and appropriate follow-up. Telemedicine could be instrumental in meeting the mental and behavioral health needs of our Kansas children, adolescents, and young adults.
- Continuation of telemedicine within the appropriate standard of care also requires adequate compensation. KAAP supports amendments to the bill that provide Medicaid and private insurance payments at least equivalent to those rates for in person services.

If the committee intends to amend the bill, we hope you will strongly consider these recommendations as a priority.



Thank you for your time and consideration in passing **HB 2206** that will allow for expansion of telemedicine in Kansas.

Please let us know how we can be a resource for you related to this bill or for future legislation related to child health and well-being. We look forward to collaborating with you to ensure that all Kansas children can reach their fullest potential.

Respectfully submitted,

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