



PRESS RELEASE

OREGON HOUSE DEMOCRATS

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House Democrats Lead on Increasing Telehealth Access for Vulnerable Populations

HB 2508 will make telehealth services accessible to Oregonians, especially rural, senior, BIPOC and LGBTQIA+ communities.

SALEM, OR— This morning, the Oregon House passed [HB 2508](#), which codifies the expanded telehealth guidance and safeguards access to physical and behavioral health services for thousands of Oregonians; especially rural, and historically marginalized communities. HB 2508 is part of a series of bills sponsored by House Democrats, aimed at realizing their goal of equitable healthcare access for all.

We know rural areas have significantly fewer primary care providers than major metropolitan areas, and the trend has only worsened. Additionally, most Oregon families live in a childcare desert, making in-person health visits challenging. These barriers can cause people to delay preventative care and forgo behavioral health care altogether.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, telehealth has been critical to providing accessible, physical and behavioral healthcare. Going forward, it will lower the multiple and varied barriers to healthcare that rural and marginalized communities experience.

“This is our opportunity to increase equity in our healthcare system for those who fall through the cracks,” said the **bill sponsor, [Rep. Rachel Prusak \(D-West Linn\)](#), chair of the House Health Care Committee**. “The pandemic was an unexpected, comprehensive pilot program for telehealth that demonstrated its effectiveness and accessibility. Telehealth will save lives and I’m proud to bring this bill forward.”

HB 2508 requires reimbursement for telehealth services for physical health care, behavioral health care and dental care. The bill also requires regulated health insurers to provide meaningful access to telemedicine services including auxiliary aids and services, and provide services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate.

The bill passed with bipartisan support and now moves to the Senate.

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