



May 9, 2017

The Honorable Brian Schatz
United States Senator
722 Hart Senate Office
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Ben Cardin
United States Senator
509 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker
United States Senator
555 Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Thune
United States Senator
511 Dirksen Senate Office
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Thad Cochran
United States Senator
113 Dirksen Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mark Warner
United States Senator
475 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Schatz, Wicker, Cochran, Cardin, Thune and Warner:

The College of Healthcare Information Management Executives (CHIME) and the Association for Executives in Healthcare Information Technology (AEHIT) are pleased to support S.1016, the Creating Opportunities Now for Necessary and Effective Care Technologies (CONNECT) for Health Act. The legislation would expand the use of telehealth and remote patient monitoring services by leveraging alternative payment models.

CHIME is an executive organization serving more than 2,300 chief information officers (CIOs) and other senior health information technology leaders at hospitals and clinics across the nation. CHIME members are responsible for the selection and implementation of clinical and business technology systems that are facilitating healthcare transformation. Recognizing the unique challenges that healthcare technology executives face, AEHIT was launched in 2014 for healthcare's senior technology leaders. AEHIT aims to advance the role of Chief Technology Officers (CTOs) in healthcare organizations by supporting policy focused on providing better patient care through technological innovation. Our CHIME and AEHIT members represent some of the earliest and most prolific adopters of electronic health records (EHRs) and other health IT resources, such as telehealth, for clinicians and patients.

Telehealth technologies offer a multitude of benefits to patients and clinicians. All too often, telehealth is viewed solely as a benefit to small and rural hospitals that need to connect to clinicians at larger tertiary facilities. Our members believe that telehealth brings value to the entire delivery system. Increasingly our members are leveraging telehealth and remote monitoring services in a variety of ways to meet patient care needs. For instance, disease monitoring services can be a less expensive, more efficient and more convenient for patients with chronic conditions to stay connected with their care team. Telehealth services

also help minimize the risk of a readmission, or bring video consultations to emergency departments. Additionally, we are seeing increased use of telepsychiatric screening.

CHIME and AEHIT members appreciate your interest in expanding access telehealth and remote patient monitoring technologies. Adequate reimbursement for hospitals and other healthcare providers for employing such services is a complex and evolving issue and, thus, has been a barrier to standardizing the provision of these valuable services. Unfortunately, efforts to revamp the federal telehealth policies have lagged behind both state and private payers. We believe federal leadership is necessary as providers and health systems explore alternative care models in order to accommodate and encourage innovation and efficiency in healthcare delivery.

We appreciate leadership on this subject and are pleased to support the CONNECT for Health Act. We stand ready to work together to pursue legislative solutions that will expand access to telehealth services for the nation's patients. Should you have questions or if we can be of assistance to advance this important legislation, please contact Leslie Krigstein, Vice President of Congressional Affairs, at lkriegstein@chimecentral.org.

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Russell P. Branzell". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Russell" and last name "Branzell" clearly legible.

Russell P. Branzell, CHCIO, LCHIME
President and CEO
CHIME