

American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network

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www.fightcancer.org/RI



House Health & Human Services Committee Testimony in Support of H7442

TO: Rep. Susan R. Donovan, Chair
Rep. Joshua J. Giraldo, First Vice Chair
Rep. Brandon C. Potter, Second Vice Chair
Members of the House Health & Human Services Committee

FROM: American Cancer Society Cancer Action Network (ACS CAN)

DATE: February 15, 2024

RE: Support for H7442

The American Cancer Society Cancer Action network (ACS CAN) is the non-partisan, non-profit advocacy affiliate of the American Cancer Society. We advocate for evidence-based public policies to reduce the cancer burden for everyone.

On behalf of ACS CAN, I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to provide testimony in support of H7442. As an advocate for all those impacted by cancer, we are pleased to see Rhode Island proposing common sense solutions to challenges and removing barriers to healthcare.

ACS CAN supports passage of H7442, which would make telemedicine in Rhode Island more accessible to patients across the Ocean State. Existing state licensing laws that restrict out-of-state providers from practicing telehealth can be a barrier to patients seeking care. Telemedicine provides cancer patients and survivors with a convenient means of accessing both cancer care and primary care.

While telemedicine cannot replace all face-to-face visits, and should not be used to determine network adequacy, the use of telemedicine provides support to an existing adequate provider network in a manner that is beneficial to patients.

Further, we have an opportunity to increase health equity through the use of telemedicine. Research shows that while overall cancer mortality rates in the U.S. are dropping, populations that have been marginalized are bearing a disproportionate burden of preventable death and disease. And despite notable advances in cancer prevention, screening, and treatment, not all individuals benefit equitably from this important progress.

The use of telemedicine offers an opportunity to reduce health disparities and improve health outcomes by:

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- Mitigating transportation barriers faced by rural communities or individuals who lack reliable transportation to medical care
- Extending the reach of navigation services so that more patients get access to resources that help eliminate other barriers to care
- Increasing access to specialty care that may not be available near an individual's home
- Alleviating barriers related to taking off from work or finding childcare to attend medical appointments

The use of telemedicine offers benefits across the cancer continuum: prevention and screening, diagnosis, treatment (including clinical trials), and survivorship. We urge the Committee to pass H7442 and make telemedicine more accessible to all Rhode Islanders.

Please feel free to contact ACS CAN's Rhode Island Government Relations Director, Ryan T. Strik, at ryan.strik@cancer.org or at (401) 259-1052 for any additional questions or information.

Thank you for your consideration.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ryan Strik".

Ryan T. Strik
Rhode Island Government Relations Director,
ACS CAN