



March 1, 2023

The Honorable Bob Morgan
Chair, House Committee on Health Care Licenses
401 South Spring Street, Stratton Office Building
Springfield, IL 62706

RE: OPPOSE: IL H.B.2215 - Teledental-Standard

Dear Chairman Morgan and members of the committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for the record regarding **HB 2215**. On behalf of the Chamber of Progress, a tech industry coalition promoting technology's progressive future, I write to respectfully urge your committee to **oppose HB 2215**.

This bill includes a mandate for in-person examinations prior to dentists being able to utilize teledentistry technologies and restricts providers from obtaining patient consent through asynchronous communication. If enacted, this requirement will threaten the benefits of teledentistry – including removing transportation barriers, increasing access to quality care, and reducing costs.

Our organization is a strong proponent of teledentistry because it offers patients safe and convenient access to dental providers through a secure platform.

Teledentistry provides residents convenient and necessary access to dental care.

Access to oral care is essential for good overall health, yet more than 45 million Americans live in dental coverage shortage areas where dental care remains out of reach.¹ Approximately 40% of Illinois adults haven't visited a dentist or dental clinic in the past year, and 64% cite cost as a barrier to care.²

Teledentistry connects patients with oral health care professionals through messaging, image sharing, and videos to identify needs and treatment at their convenience by providing the flexibility of asynchronous technology. Providing patients with flexible access to treatment eliminates the significant obstacles they would usually have to

¹Dental Health Professional Shortage Areas, National Conference of State Legislatures, (Sept. 2022) <https://www.ncsl.org/research/health/dental-health-professional-shortage-areas>

² State agency needs to act so more underserved residents can get dental care, Chicago Suntimes, (Sept. 2022), <https://chicago.suntimes.com/2022/9/29/23375173/illinois-residents-dental-care-department-financial-professional-regulation-lakesia-collins-op-ed>

endure, such as lack of transportation, childcare services and resources, physical challenges, and inability to take time off from work.

HB 2215 could increase unnecessary health care costs by forcing patients to get treatment they do not need. Teledentistry ensures lower-cost options for patients by protecting them from schemes set by the incumbent, in-person dental and orthodontic providers looking to tack on unnecessary extra services.

The proposed rule would restrict access to affordable health care by requiring patients to appear in person in order to be eligible to receive treatment. By forcing patients to receive in-person testing before all treatment, this rule would prioritize the earnings of practicing doctors over the greater good of residents.

HB 2215 seeks to invoke health and safety as a pretext for reducing competition and preserving the status quo in dental and orthodontic services. This legislation is an attempt by incumbent dental and orthodontic professionals to block lower cost options and foreclose competition from teledentistry providers. But this attempt to block new, less expensive competition will burden patients with long travel, taking time off from work, and paying for x-rays and images that may not be necessary for the elected services they wish to have.

Dentists that have employed teledentistry technology to treat patients are held to the same standard of care as any other dental professional in their field. There is no evidence that there has been an issue complying with the standard of care, and instead, a growing body of evidence supports the efficacy of teledentistry for accurately diagnosing dental pathologies.³

Illinois has many residents in need of safe, convenient, affordable, and accessible dental care. For the reasons cited above, we encourage you to oppose **HB 2215 as it would eliminate the options needed to serve these residents.**

Thank you for your consideration on this important matter.

Respectfully,

Kouri Marshall
Director of State and Local Government Relations, Central Region
Chamber of Progress

³ Mohamed Estai, A systematic review of the research evidence for the benefits of teledentistry, Journal of Telemedicine and Telecare, 24(3):147-156, (April 2018).