

On Jan 18, 2016, at 1:09 PM, annenorton <annebnorton@gmail.com> wrote:

Greetings Representative Vazquez,

Im so grateful you are willing to support this bill to increase access to quality mental health services by requiring insurance plans to allow for telemedicine delivery and to reimburse therapists/ clinicians, psychologists.

I have been providing telemedicine in Alaskans for a several years, as well as in New Mexico and Washington state. (I am licensed in all states) and have had great difficulty with insurance plans reimbursing me, and in some cases have not been successful in gaining approval.

I work with teachers in the bush, who cannot possibly travel out to see me weekly, or even monthly as that is cost prohibitive, yet they require mental health support. I also have a very unique speciality, (working with deaf clients using sign language) and those clients need someone with my skills, as there are only a couple others with the ability to provide direct therapy using fluent sign language. I cannot possibly travel to all deaf clients, and neither can they travel in. Thus, I provide web services.

Many more Alaskan clinicians would likely provide telemedicine services if this bill is approved, offering all their unique and wonderful services that are now only available in Anchorage, to the entire state!

Imagine the potential increase in mental health, and the potential decrease in suicides in this wonderful state with the passage of this bill.

Alaska is simply too big, with too few providers in outlying areas, to not pass this bill. It will cost the state nothing, but the benefit is significant.

If you have any questions feel free to contact me.

Thank you,

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