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**Statement by Lora Pellegrini, President and CEO of the Massachusetts Association of Health Plans, on *An Act Promoting a Resilient Health Care System that Puts Patients First*
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MAHP and our member plans are strong supporters of ensuring telehealth services for our members and the employers we serve. Telehealth has been an important tool to ensure members have continued access to provider services during closures associated with the COVID-19 pandemic.

In order for telehealth to truly deliver on its promise of increased access to high-quality care at lower costs, it is imperative that market-based negotiations set the reimbursement rate and any extension of mandated rates of payment be time-limited. We applaud the conference committee for ensuring that some telehealth services can be negotiated after the current state of emergency, but we are concerned that it will require health plans to reimburse for other services at the same rate as in person visits for two years.

While we are pleased with other provisions in the bill, such as the increased Medicaid payment rates for community hospitals, MAHP is disappointed that the final conference agreement did not address the well-documented and growing concern of surprise billing in a comprehensive way. Congress passed legislation which may result in higher premiums for employers and consumers, making it more important than ever that the Massachusetts Legislature establish a policy for out of network providers that is fair, but does not provide an excessive rate of payment.

We look forward to working with the House and Senate on this important issue in the next session.

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