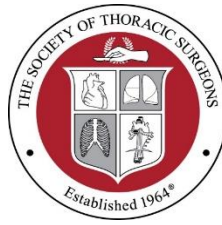


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November 30, 2023

The Honorable Troy Balderson
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Neal Dunn, MD
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Schweikert
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bill Johnson
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mike Carey
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: H.R. 6364, Medicare Telehealth Privacy Act of 2023

Dear Representatives Balderson, Dunn, Schweikert, Johnson and Carey,

On behalf of The Society of Thoracic Surgeons (STS), I would like to thank you for introducing H.R. 6364, Medicare Telehealth Privacy Act of 2023. This legislation provides much-needed protections for providers offering telehealth services by allowing them to report their practice address as their provider location. By doing this, providers are not required to publicly report their home addresses and helps to maintain privacy. As the leading professional society representing thoracic surgeons in the United States, we recognize the urgency of taking measures to ensure the safety and well-being of healthcare workers.

Founded in 1964, STS is a not-for-profit organization representing more than 7,700 surgeons, researchers, and allied healthcare professionals worldwide who are dedicated to ensuring the best possible outcomes for surgeries of the heart, lungs, and esophagus, as well as other surgical procedures within the chest.

Data collected during COVID-19 demonstrates the positive impact telehealth has had on both patient clinical outcomes and patient experiences and are equivalent to in-person care for certain conditions. Additionally, research shows that the use of telehealth provides access to care despite geographic barriers, reduces burden on medical infrastructure, and lessens exposure to infectious diseases for all participants. Telehealth offers great benefits to patients receiving the services and to the providers offering them.

However, it is not practical, workable, or safe to require a provider to publicly report their home address as their practice location. Medicare providers should not be compelled to share their personal information, especially when it relates to their home addresses. **We commend your recognition of this issue and your dedication to promoting safety through the creation of the Medicare Telehealth Privacy Act of 2023.** In an environment in which threats against healthcare professionals have markedly increased, the safety and privacy of physicians must be paramount.

Please contact Molly Peltzman, Associate Director of Health Policy, at mpeltzman@sts.org, or Derek Brandt, Vice President of Government Affairs, at dbrandt@sts.org, should you need additional information or clarification.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Thomas E. MacGillivray". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent initial 'T'.

Thomas E. MacGillivray, MD
President