



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

## Signed into Law, Metzger Bill Expands Telehealth Insurance Reimbursements by Authorizing Audio-Only Communication

JEN METZGER June 17, 2020

| ISSUE: **TELEHEALTH, RURAL BROADBAND SERVICE, HEALTH EQUITY**



**Hudson Valley and Catskills, NY...** Today the Governor signed into law Senator Metzger's bill ([S8416](#)) to include audio-only services in the definition of telemedicine, allowing New Yorkers without broadband service, a computer, or smartphone to receive affordable healthcare services remotely. Prior to the law's passage, public health law required both audio and video telemedicine services in order to be eligible for reimbursement by Medicaid and the Child Health Insurance Plan. Thanks to the new law, phone calls with medical professionals can

also be covered to ensure the widest possible access to healthcare services.

“Telemedicine has not been an option during this pandemic for many people in my rural district, and this legislation will reduce barriers to care for residents who lack broadband or do not own a computer or smartphone," **said Senator Metzger (SD-42)**. "By making audio-only services reimbursable, I expect that many more at-risk people who are worried about exposure to COVID-19 will seek the care they need."

The NYS School Boards Association and NYS Psychological Association both advocated for passage of the bill, which was introduced in the Assembly by Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal (AD-67). In the Senate, support for the bill was nearly unanimous, and it was one of over 30 pieces of legislation passed to help support New Yorkers during the COVID-19 pandemic and better prepare the state for future emergencies.

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#### RELATED LEGISLATION

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### **2019-S8416**

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate

- ○ On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate

- ○ Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate

- Delivered to Governor

- Signed By Governor

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Includes audio-only and video-only telehealth and telemedicine services in those telehealth and telemedicine services eligible for reimbursement

May 25, 2020

Signed by Governor

Sponsored by **Jen Metzger**

Do you support this bill?