



Albany Medical College

Albert Einstein
College of Medicine

Columbia University
Vagelos College of
Physicians and Surgeons

CUNY School of Medicine

Icahn School of Medicine
at Mount Sinai

Jacobs School of Medicine
and Biomedical Sciences,
the University at Buffalo

New York Institute of
Technology College of
Osteopathic Medicine

New York Medical College

NYU Long Island School of
Medicine

NYU Robert I. Grossman
School of Medicine

Renaissance School of
Medicine at Stony Brook
University

School of Medicine and
Dentistry at the University
of Rochester Medical
Center

SUNY Downstate Health
Sciences University

SUNY Upstate
Medical University

Touro College of
Osteopathic Medicine

Weill Cornell
Medicine

Zucker School of Medicine
at Hofstra/Northwell

August 26, 2020

The Honorable Roy Blunt
United States Senate
260 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Chris Murphy
United States Senate
136 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Blunt and Murphy,

On behalf of the Associated Medical Schools of New York (AMSNY), I would like to thank you for introducing S. 4421, the Temporary Reciprocity to Ensure Access to Treatment (TREAT) Act of 2020, and offer our support to ensure passage of this critical legislation. We understand that this legislation would help expand access to care for patients by creating a temporary uniform licensing standard for physicians and other practitioners who hold a valid license in good standing to practice in all states during the national emergency and subsequent transition period. This temporary license would be valid for both in-person and telehealth visits.

AMSNY is the consortium of New York State’s 17 medical schools which have been working throughout the pandemic to ensure that the people of New York are able to access high quality and safe healthcare. As you are well aware, the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic has made it extremely difficult for patients to see their doctors or other health care professionals. During the peak of the outbreak in New York, patients were instructed not to visit health care facilities, hospitals or physician’s offices to avoid both overwhelming the medical system and to decrease the likelihood that the virus will spread further.

New York is both closely bordered by a number of other states where patients frequently cross state lines to see their provider and serves as a medical destination for many people. However, state medical board jurisdiction is based on the physical location of the patient, not the provider and in almost all telemedicine encounters of this nature, the patient would be at home and the provider could be practicing without a license in the state where the patient resides. This situation would make it very difficult for a patient see their normal or recommended provider or could put the provider in a situation where they risk committing a crime or ethical violation. Further, New York was fortunate that many healthcare providers around the country travelled to provide their services when our state was in dire need.

In response to these issues, many states took steps to waive or suspend certain licensing requirements during the pandemic, but this resulted in a patchwork of rules and took significant time and effort. Creating a system of temporary national licensing under the TREAT Act would provide flexibility and streamline the licensing process. AMSNY also urges Congress to work with the Department of Health and Human Services to develop a more permanent solution to these licensing concerns as we anticipate

additional waves of the pandemic to hit and expect the widespread adoption of telehealth to continue well beyond the pandemic.

For these reasons, AMSNY supports passage of S. 4421, the TREAT Act of 2020, and we look forward to working to ensure passage and enactment of this legislation. Thank you again for your strong support on these issues and we look forward to working with you in the future. If you have any questions or concerns, please email me at jowiederhorn@amsny.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jo Wiederhorn". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jo Wiederhorn
President & CEO, AMSNY