



February 13, 2023

Chair Brenda Landwehr
House Committee on Health and Human Services
Kansas House of Representatives
300 W. 10th Ave., Room 352-S
Topeka, KS 66612

RE: Support for HB 2288 WRITTEN ONLY

Dear Chair Landwehr and members of the House Committee on Health and Human Services,

On behalf of Teladoc Health, I write to express support for House Bill 2288. This legislation would enact the Counseling Compact in Kansas and is a positive step forward to expedite the process by which out-of-state licensed counselors can treat in-state patients. Teladoc Health respectfully urges the Committee to vote in favor of these bills.

Teladoc Health is the world's largest telehealth company and has more than 5,000 employees (not including the thousands of physicians who practice through the Teladoc Health technology platform), delivers health care in 175 countries and in more than 40 languages, and partners with employers, hospitals, health systems, and more than 50 health insurance plans in all 50 states, including in Kansas, to transform health care delivery. Teladoc Health provides health care services to more than 40 percent of Fortune 500 employers, as well as thousands of small businesses, labor unions and public-sector employers, which offer our virtual care services to their employees.

In Kansas, Teladoc Health is offered as a benefit by over 6,000 employers covering over 425,000 patients in the state. Some of the employers that offer Teladoc Health as a benefit include: the city of Wichita, National Beef, LINECO, Pfizer, Inc., and Boeing. Teladoc also contracts with Aetna and Oscar Health to provide virtual care services for their health plans.

Reports over the past several years have shown that mental health crises continue to increase among U.S. residents. More and more patients turn to virtual and in-person care to seek timely, high-quality behavioral health care services. Unfortunately, the increased demand for these services can – and often does – surpass the number of available, in-state licensed professionals who can treat patients in a timely manner. Instituting the Counseling Compact in Kansas is a commonsense measure that will ensure there is a larger pool of available counselors who can work with patients to improve their mental health.

HB 2288 would also allow virtual care platforms such as Teladoc Health to better leverage their workforce of licensed counselors across the nation. It remains our goal to provide Kansas residents with safe, effective, and valuable mental health care where and when they need it. The counselors who use the Teladoc Health platform to connect with patients have all met the necessary requirements to be licensed in the states in which they practice. Many of the states in which counselors are licensed have standards that meet or exceed licensing requirements in

Kansas. Should this measure be enacted, our platform will be able to leverage our highly qualified provider base to ensure patients have access to timely, meaningful, and affordable mental health care.

Teladoc Health appreciates the opportunity to provide our company's unique perspective on the efficacy of HB 2288. This legislation is an important step toward expanding the pool of available counselors who can meet the needs of patients across the state. To that end, we respectfully urge the Committee to vote in favor of this bill in a timely manner. I can be reached at ctucker@teladochealth.com should you have any additional questions, or if Teladoc Health can provide further information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'C Tucker', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Claudia Duck Tucker
Senior Vice President, Government Affairs
Teladoc Health