

House Bill 609

By: Representatives Dawkins-Haigler of the 93rd, Stephenson of the 92nd, and Beasley-Teague of the 65th

A BILL TO BE ENTITLED
AN ACT

1 To amend Article 1 of Chapter 24 of Title 33 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated,
2 relating to general provisions regarding insurance, so as to require health benefit policy
3 coverage for telemedicine services; to provide for definitions; to amend Article 7 of Chapter
4 4 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to medical assistance
5 generally, so as to provide for coverage for telemedicine services for Medicaid recipients;
6 to provide for a definition; to provide for related matters; to repeal conflicting laws; and for
7 other purposes.

8 BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF GEORGIA:

9 **SECTION 1.**

10 Article 1 of Chapter 24 of Title 33 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
11 general provisions regarding insurance, is amended by adding a new Code section to read as
12 follows:

13 "33-24-59.14.

14 (a) As used in this Code section, the term:

15 (1) 'Health benefit policy' means any individual or group plan, policy, or contract for
16 health care services issued, delivered, issued for delivery, or renewed in this state which
17 provides major medical benefits, including those contracts executed by the State of
18 Georgia on behalf of state employees under Article 1 of Chapter 18 of Title 45, by a
19 health care corporation, health maintenance organization, preferred provider organization,
20 accident and sickness insurer, fraternal benefit society, hospital service corporation,
21 medical service corporation, or other insurer or similar entity.

22 (2) 'Telemedicine services' means the use of interactive audio, video, medical, and public
23 health care supported by mobile devices or other telecommunications technology by a
24 health care provider to deliver health care services at a site other than the site of a
25 patient's location, including the use of electronic media for consultation relating to the
26 health care diagnosis or treatment of the patient.

27 (b) Every health benefit policy that is delivered, issued, executed, or renewed in this state
 28 or approved for issuance or renewal in this state on or after July 1, 2011, shall provide
 29 coverage for telemedicine services."

30 **SECTION 2.**

31 Article 7 of Chapter 4 of Title 49 of the Official Code of Georgia Annotated, relating to
 32 medical assistance generally, is amended by revising Code Section 49-4-156, which is
 33 reserved, as follows:

34 "49-4-156.

35 (a) As used in this Code section, the term 'telemedicine services' means the use of
 36 interactive audio, video, medical, and public health care supported by mobile devices or
 37 other telecommunications technology by a health care provider to deliver health care
 38 services at a site other than the site of a patient's location, including the use of electronic
 39 media for consultation relating to the health care diagnosis or treatment of the patient.

40 (b) The medical assistance provided under this article shall include coverage for
 41 telemedicine services furnished by providers of medical assistance to recipients of medical
 42 assistance."

43 **SECTION 3.**

44 All laws and parts of laws in conflict with this Act are repealed.