

Senate Health & Welfare Committee

Tuesday, March 22, 2022 - 2:00 P.M.

TESTIMONY ON: H 760

Registered Testifiers (Testimony)

Name (First & Last)	City	Written Testimony
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Lupe Wissel

Boise

Good Afternoon Chairman Martin and members of the committee. My name is Lupe Wissel, State Director for AARP Idaho. On behalf of our 184,000 Idaho members, I am here to voice our support of House Bill 760, - an interstate licensure bill would allow out-of-state mental health providers the ability to practice in Idaho as long as they hold a valid license and are in good other states.

We have stood before this committee numerous times to advocate for updates to Idaho's telehealth statutes and to highlight the positive impact telehealth makes in the lives of older Idahoans and their family caregivers.

The flexibilities allowed through the pandemic have bolstered telehealth access by expanding the locations, delivery methods, providers, and services that could be covered during a telehealth appointment.

We saw how telehealth changed the way we view healthcare and how it put more control in the hands of the patients. Idahoans who had never heard about telehealth participated in their first telehealth appointments, and family caregivers were given the opportunity to participate or ask questions of their loved ones' health care providers from afar. The benefits of telehealth are more pronounced for patients in underserved or rural communities where some health care services may not be readily available, for older adults with disabilities or physical limitations and for caregivers – all of whom may experience additional barriers when seeking in-person care. Telehealth can eliminate or alleviate many of these barriers and improves access to care.

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, we support the continued efforts of the Legislature to remove barriers to telehealth for providers, patients, and family caregivers and respectfully ask that you send House Bill 760 to the floor with a do-pass recommendation. I will stand for any questions.