



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jen Metzger

## Metzger Bill Expands Telehealth Insurance Reimbursements to Include Audio-Only Communication

JEN METZGER May 26, 2020

| ISSUE: [BROADBAND](#), [BROADBAND GAP](#), [TELEHEALTH](#), [CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC](#); [COVID-19](#)



**Hudson Valley and Catskills, NY...**The Senate Health Committee today cleared the way for passage of a bill introduced by Senator Jen Metzger (SD-42) to include audio-only services in the definition of telemedicine so that New Yorkers in areas without broadband have affordable access to healthcare remotely. The bill, which passed the Health Committee unanimously, is expected to go to the floor tomorrow for a vote of the full legislature.

Currently, under public health law, telemedicine must include both audio and video services to be eligible for reimbursement by Medicaid and the Child Health Insurance Plan. Metzger's bill, [S8416](#), amends the law to authorize audio-only provider services as eligible for reimbursement so that phone calls with medical professionals can also be covered. The bill will provide much-needed relief to New Yorkers who are unable to access video-enabled devices.

"Telemedicine has not been an option during this pandemic for many people in my rural district who lack broadband service, a computer or smartphone, depriving them of the access to healthcare professionals that others enjoy from the safety of their homes," **said Senator Metzger**. "By making audio-only services reimbursable, this legislation will greatly expand affordable access to telemedicine and reduce barriers to care in rural communities."

The bill, sponsored by Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal (AD-67) in the Assembly, will come to a vote in the legislature on Wednesday, May 27.

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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?