



# CONNECTICUT PHYSICAL THERAPY ASSOCIATION

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## **Testimony of James P. Leahy, CAE Executive Director, CT Physical Therapy Association**

### **In support of H.B 6487, AAC Standards for Telemedicine Services**

#### **Before the Joint Committee on Public Health February 23, 2015**

Chairperson Gerratana, Chairperson Ritter, Members of the Public Health Committee. My name is James Leahy and I am the Executive Director for the Connecticut Physical Therapy Association. I am here today to testify in support of HB 6487, AAC Standards for Telemedicine Services.

First, I would like to thank the Committee for allowing us the opportunity to testify on this issue. The use of telemedicine services and its impact on how we are able to care for our patients is an emerging issue for physical therapists and other health care professionals. We believe that access to this service delivery system will allow for care that can be critically important to a patient's long-term health.

The complex US health care system is under a tremendous amount of pressure. Many traditional health care business models are designed to allow high-volume, low-cost procedures to offset the costs of low-volume, high-cost procedures. An upward shift in the aging population is projected to result in a large increase in demand for health care, and new legislation such as the Affordable Care Act has added uncertainty to the future of health care business models and payment. Telehealth is projected to grow worldwide to 1.8 million users by 2017, according to the World Market of Telehealth.

In physical therapy, our patients/clients are asking for more time-efficient and less costly care models. Their busy lifestyles also can make it difficult for them to attend traditional appointments.

Applications of telehealth in physical therapy already have roots that expand throughout patient/client care and consultation, as it allows PTs to better communicate with patients/clients and provide more flexible care. We urge the committee to pass the bill and to ensure that non-physician providers are included in the scope of work allowed.

Thanks for the opportunity to testify.