119TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. _____

Supporting the designation of the week of September 20 through September 26, 2026, as ''Telehealth Awareness Week''.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SCHATZ (for himself, Mr. WICKER, Mr. WARNER, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mr. WELCH, and Mr. BARRASSO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Supporting the designation of the week of September 20 through September 26, 2026, as ''Telehealth Awareness Week''.

Whereas telehealth allows a health care practitioner to furnish healthcare services to a patient or a practitioner at a different physical location than the healthcare practitioner;

Whereas telehealth plays a significant role in supporting access to quality healthcare services for millions of patients;

Whereas healthcare workforce shortages are a significant problem in many areas and for many types of healthcare clinicians;

Whereas telehealth increases access to healthcare in areas with workforce shortages and for individuals who live far

away from healthcare facilities, have limited mobility or access to transportation, or have other barriers to accessing care;

Whereas, prior to the COVID–19 pandemic, the utilization of telehealth services in the Medicare program under title XVIII of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395 et seq.) was low, accounting for approximately 0.1 percent of visits of patients receiving healthcare services under Medicare part B in 2019;

Whereas 23 percent of Medicare beneficiaries received at least 1 telehealth service in 2025;

Whereas, in its 2025 survey of Medicare beneficiaries ages 65 and over, the Medicare Payment Advisory Commission found that more than 90 percent of Medicare beneficiaries who received a telehealth service were satisfied with their experience;

Whereas, in 2025, telehealth was a routine healthcare modality with nearly 11 percent of all Medicare beneficiaries and more than 20 percent of dually eligible Medicare and Medicaid beneficiaries using telehealth in the last quarter of the calendar year;

Whereas telehealth is a common care modality for Medicare beneficiaries to receive behavioral health services, with as of June 2024, 1 study finding that 44 percent of behavioral health visits among traditional Medicare beneficiaries are delivered by telehealth;

Whereas federally qualified health centers and rural health clinics use telehealth to deliver services to rural and underserved populations;

Whereas telehealth now represents a critical component of healthcare delivery;

Whereas any lapse in Medicare coverage for telehealth services could adversely impact patient access to care;

Whereas legislative efforts to increase telehealth access have received bipartisan support in the Senate and the House of Representatives;

Whereas the United States has an opportunity to help improve access to health services for all individuals, including members of rural and underserved communities; and

Whereas ''Telehealth Awareness Week'' unites the efforts of patients, caregivers, healthcare providers, policymakers, and other stakeholders to advance the role of telehealth in healthcare: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of September 20 through September 26, 2026, as ''Telehealth Awareness Week'';

(2) recognizes the impact of telehealth in delivering healthcare services for patients across the United States; and

(3) urges that steps should be taken to—

(A) raise awareness about the benefits of telehealth;

(B) highlight resources for healthcare providers and patients regarding telehealth;

(C) collect and analyze data on the impacts of telehealth; and

(D) promote continuous access to telehealth for all communities and across settings.