



# ROB STAFSHOLT

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**DATE:** June 4th, 2025  
**RE:** Testimony on Senate Bill 214  
**TO:** Members of the Senate Committee on Health  
**FROM:** Senator Rob Stafsholt

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Thank you, Chairman Cabral-Guevara, and members of the Senate Committee on Health, for hearing Senate Bill 214 relating to registration of out-of-state health care providers to provide telehealth services.

This bill is a direct answer to the healthcare shortage in Wisconsin, in rural areas in particular. Senate Bill 214 expands and improves health care services for all by reducing regulatory burdens and providing accessibility to qualified, out-of-state health care providers by allowing professionals that are licensed in another state to provide telehealth services to Wisconsinites within the scope of practice established in Wisconsin. This bill would allow folks to keep receiving care from their existing, trusted provider should they need to relocate. It also allows patients with more complex issues, who need care from multiple specialists on a regular basis, to receive that necessary care more efficiently.

SB 214 also requires the Department of Safety and Professional Services (DSPS) and any applicable credentialing board to register such providers as a telehealth provider in Wisconsin, provided they meet certain criteria, including already having the health care credential issued by another state and being required to have a clean disciplinary record. It also requires DSPS to publish on its website, a list of all health care providers registered to provide telehealth services under this bill.

According to the Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), over 1.2 million Wisconsinites live in a primary care professional shortage area, and 1.5 million Wisconsinites live in a mental health professional shortage area. This bill offers one solution to those critical shortages. Additionally, this bill can help to drive down the ever-rising costs for employers to provide healthcare to their employees.

I thank you for taking the time to consider this bill and I hope you will support it. Please reach out with any questions or concerns.



To: Members of the Wisconsin Senate Committee on Health

From: Kyle Maichle, President and Board Chairman, Americans for Autism Advocacy

Date: May 14, 2025

RE: **Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 214: Registration of Out-of-State Health Care Providers to Provide Telehealth Services**

Madam Chairwoman Cabral-Guveara, Vice Chair Testin, and Ranking Member Smith:

Good Afternoon, my name is Kyle Maichle from Sun Prairie, WI, and I serve as President and Board Chairman of Americans for Autism Advocacy (AFAA). I am also proud to be an openly neurodivergent Wisconsinite.

AFAA is an IRS 501(c)4 organization registered with the Internal Revenue Service. AFAA is dedicated to advocating for economic, educational, ethics reform, and health care policies that benefit the neurodivergent communities at the state and federal levels.

AFAA supports Wisconsin Senate Bill 214 (SB 214), which aims to create Wis. Stat. § 440.18. This proposed legislation would enable qualified out-of-state health care providers to register and provide telehealth services to Wisconsin residents. By establishing a legal framework for these professionals to practice in the state, SB 214 would build upon Wisconsin's history of high-quality health care. Autism Parenting Magazine rates Wisconsin as the eighth most supportive state in the nation to raise a kid with Autism<sup>1</sup>. SB 214 has the potential to further establish Wisconsin as a national leader in supporting neurodivergent individuals. Passage SB 214 and its companion legislation in the Assembly is a welcome step forward for neurodivergent Wisconsinites.

### **Enhancing Access to Specialized Care**

SB 214 aims to improve access to specialized care for neurodivergent individuals, including those with ADHD, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Dyslexia, Down's Syndrome, and Tourette's. These individuals often need specialized services and may have co-occurring conditions requiring multiple specialists, which can be challenging to find locally, especially in rural or underserved areas.

SB 214 addresses this need by allowing qualified, licensed out-of-state healthcare providers to offer telehealth services. This would increase the pool of available professionals, including licensed professional counselors, psychiatrists, physicians, and speech pathologists, who already serve Wisconsin's neurodivergent community.

The bill is designed to ensure that only licensed professionals in good standing can provide this care, maintaining the integrity of professional licensing. AFAA supports SB 214 because it

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<sup>1</sup> Autism Parenting Magazine, <https://www.autismparentingmagazine.com/supportive-states-raising-autism-child/>

breaks down barriers to care while upholding professional standards, ultimately benefiting Wisconsin residents by expanding access to necessary medical services.

### **The Increase in Autism Diagnosis Rates in the United States Should Convince the Wisconsin Legislature to Make Telehealth More Accessible**

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services revealed the findings of the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) survey on April 17, 2025<sup>2</sup>. In 2022, HHS selected Wisconsin as one of 14 states for a survey monitoring Autism diagnosis in children aged four to eight. This ADDM survey focused on eight counties in Southeastern Wisconsin, testing 28,098 students for signs of Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). The survey revealed that Wisconsin had the second highest ASD prevalence at 38.4 percent, the second-highest among the surveyed states. California had the highest ASD prevalence at over 53.1 percent, with monitoring conducted only in San Diego County. The increased prevalence of ASD in Wisconsin found in the ADDM survey shows that The Badger State needs more qualified professionals to respond to the increase in ASD diagnosis. Neurodivergent individuals depending on their circumstances work with a team of qualified professionals. These professionals answer needs from providing psychotherapy services to social support delivered by licensed social workers. Telehealth could be a potential option for neurodivergent Wisconsinites in rural areas when they face challenges in accessing services. Wisconsin currently has the Children's Long Term Support Waiver for optional telehealth services<sup>3</sup>. Enacting SB 214 would ensure increased access to telehealth when neurodivergent individuals can be in an sensory-friendly environment.

### **Addressing Malpractice Concerns**

AFAA delivered testimony on the companion legislation, AB 212, in front of the Assembly Committee on Health, Aging, and Long Term Care on May 14, 2025. Rep. Neylon raised concerns about malpractice during questioning. 32 states do not require medical malpractice insurance<sup>4</sup>. All four of our neighboring states do not require such coverage. Employers in states that do not require malpractice coverage may require practitioners to carry coverage as a condition of their employment. Wisconsin is only one of seven states in the country that require malpractice coverage. Adjacent Indiana is one of seven states that administer medical malpractice through a special program or injured patients compensation fund. Indiana has a requirement for participants in their injured patient compensation fund to maintain coverage<sup>5</sup>. Across the nation, medical malpractice laws vary significantly. It is important for this committee to consider this inconsistency. Senate Bill 214 permits both the Department of Safety and Professional Services and other licensing boards outside Wisconsin to act should a licensed telehealth provider neglect to report any adverse or enforcement actions, including those stemming from malpractice. To further alleviate malpractice concerns for committee members, SB 214 mandates that telehealth providers must have no disciplinary actions in their home state within the five years prior to their application.

<sup>2</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, <https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/74/ss/ss7402a1.htm>

<sup>3</sup> World Economic Forum, <https://www.weforum.org/stories/2023/08/how-telehealth-can-make-healthcare-services-more-accessible/>

<sup>4</sup> Griffith E. Harris Insurance, <https://griffiththeharris.com/medical-malpractice-insurance-requirements-by-state/>

<sup>5</sup> Law Office of Kelley J. Johnson, <https://www.medmalpractice.law/medical-malpractice-lawyer/patients-compensation-fund/#~:text=Under%20Indiana%20law%2C%20if%20the,from%20the%20provider's%20insurance%20coverage.>

**Members of the Wisconsin Senate Committee on Health**  
**Written Testimony of President and Board Chairman Mr. Kyle Maichle**  
**Supporting SB 214**  
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**Conclusion**

SB 214 is a step forward for Wisconsin by:

- Expands the pool of qualified, licensed professionals, including those specializing in specific care areas.
- Guarantees that only licensed professionals in good standing can provide telehealth services in Wisconsin.
- Improves access to quality care for neurodivergent individuals with co-occurring conditions.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify, and I welcome any further questions.  
The Americans for Autism Advocacy Board of Directors consisting of:

*Mr. Kyle Maichle, President and Board Chairman, Sun Prairie, WI*  
*Mr. Nicholas Glad, Board Secretary, Formerly of Milwaukee, now in Albuquerque, NM.*  
*Ms. Jacqueline Pickrell, Treasurer, Albuquerque, NM.*  
*Ms. Emily Smedlund, At-Large 1 Board Member, Cary, Illinois*  
*Mr. Daniel C. Loftis, At-Large 2 Board Member, Titusville, FL*



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*VICE-PRESIDENT, MILWAUKEE*

**CHRISTOPHER J. MACGILLIS**  
*SECRETARY, MILWAUKEE*

**COREY G. LORENZ**  
*TREASURER, MADISON*

**PETER M. YOUNG**  
*PAST-PRESIDENT, WAUSAU*

**BRYAN M. ROESSLER**  
*EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR*

## **Amend AB-212/SB-214 to Protect Patients**

Under Chapter 655 of the Wisconsin Statutes, health care providers are required to maintain medical malpractice insurance featuring at least \$1 million in coverage per occurrence/claim. Any economic damages above that amount are then covered by the Injured Patients and Families Compensation Fund (IPFCF). This regime serves to protect medical professionals and injured patients. Medical professionals then pay a fee to participate in the IPFCF to obtain this vital extension in insurance coverage.

All health care providers who practice in Wisconsin for more than 240 hours annually are required to participate in the IPFCF under Wis. Stat. § 655.002.

**Bill Creates Potential Loophole that Should be Closed.** Telehealth providers who provide more than 240 hours of care to Wisconsin patients should be required to maintain the same level of insurance coverage as they would be if physically located here. Without explicitly requiring coverage, providers could use telehealth as a means of circumventing IPFCF participation requirements to the detriment of both themselves and patients.

**Follow the Example set by AB-257.** AB-257 adapts the Ch. 655 insurance coverage regime to extend vital protection to medical professionals and patients to the new types of providers facilitated by the bill. This bill should follow that example.





June 3, 2025

The Honorable Rachel Cabral-Guevara  
Chair, Senate Committee on Health  
Wisconsin State Legislature  
Room 323 South  
State Capitol  
PO Box 7882  
Madison, WI 53707

The Honorable Patrick Testin  
Vice-Chair, Senate Committee on Health  
Wisconsin State Legislature  
Room 8 South  
State Capitol  
PO Box 8952  
Madison, WI 53708

**RE: Teladoc Health's Support for Senate Bill 214**

Dear Chair Cabral-Guevara, Vice-Chair Testin and members of the Senate Committee on Health,

On behalf of Teladoc Health, I write in support of Senate Bill 214 which creates a process for certain individuals who hold a license, certification, registration, or permit granted by another state to apply for and receive a privilege to practice in Wisconsin. We respectfully request that the Committee vote in favor of this bill.

By way of background, Teladoc Health is the world's largest telehealth company with more than 5,000 employees. We deliver health care in 175 countries and in more than 40 languages. We partner with employers, hospitals, health systems, and more than 50 health insurance plans in all 50 states – including Wisconsin – to transform health care delivery. Teladoc Health provides health care services to more than 40 percent of Fortune 500 employers as well as thousands of small businesses, labor unions and public-sector employers which offer our virtual care services to their employees.

Teladoc Health is offered as a benefit by over 9,000 Wisconsin employers covering over 800 thousand patients in the state. Some of the employers that offer Teladoc Health as a benefit include: Kohler, Nestle, Abbott, Greenheck, Green Bay Area Public Schools, Brown County, and the City of Kenosha. Teladoc also contracts with Aetna, Anthem, Group Health Cooperative (Medicaid), and UnitedHealthcare to provide virtual care services for their health plan beneficiaries.

**The Need for More Healthcare Providers**

Provider shortages are a considerable problem across the nation, including in Wisconsin. Unfortunately, there simply are not enough providers to meet demand. The Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA) found that over 1.2 million Wisconsin residents live within a primary care health



care professional shortage area,<sup>1</sup> and over 1.5 million Wisconsin residents live within a mental health care health professional shortage area.<sup>2</sup> In fact, the entirety of over 40 counties are designated as both provider shortage areas for primary care<sup>3</sup> and provider shortages for mental health.<sup>4</sup>

Several local Wisconsin organizations have also noted the impact of this workforce shortage. A March 2022 report from the Wisconsin Hospital Association (WHA) found that an “aging workforce combined with a spike in worker departures created unprecedented levels of vacancy rates. A lack of workers, combined with a licensing backlog affecting health care workers, leaves health care providers struggling to staff their facilities.”<sup>5</sup>

Similarly, the University of Wisconsin School of Medicine and Public Health notes that “Wisconsin faces a deficit of more than 8,000 healthcare positions across the state, with 3,500 of them in the Madison area.”<sup>6</sup> Unfortunately, without intervention and a way to utilize the national network of providers, the problem may only worsen. The WHA released a study that found that by 2030, Wisconsin will see many people leaving or retiring from the healthcare industry while the number of patients to be served will only increase.<sup>7</sup>

### **The Solution: Licensure Portability**

While it may take several years for the education system to retool with an expanded emphasis on developing a pipeline for healthcare professionals, the legislation before you today offers a short-term solution which can be implemented immediately.

We commend the Wisconsin Legislature for its leadership in tackling this workforce shortage dilemma by addressing licensure reforms. Teladoc Health supports all commonsense efforts to increase cross-state recognition of health professional licenses. From our own experience, we witnessed Governors and Legislatures across the country remove state licensure barriers to practice during the COVID-19 pandemic. The result was a more efficient, nimble, and effective health care system which allowed providers to quickly serve patients where they were as the disease moved from hotspot to hotspot without having to overcome the various hurdles of traditional licensure. These licensure flexibilities (many of which have subsequently been made permanent) led to faster and more convenient patient care, diverted patients from unnecessary ER/urgent care visits, and was done in a safe and reliable manner.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/primary-care-health-professional-shortage-areas-hpsas/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22desc%22%7D>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.kff.org/other/state-indicator/mental-health-care-health-professional-shortage-areas-hpsas/?currentTimeframe=0&sortModel=%7B%22colId%22:%22Location%22,%22sort%22:%22desc%22%7D>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/charts/5?state=WI>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.ruralhealthinfo.org/charts/7?state=WI>

<sup>5</sup> [https://captimes.com/news/government/lobbyists-wisconsin-health-care-workers-shortage-could-drive-bipartisan-action/article\\_c1821744-f89d-502d-a9ce-eb4e998dc13e.html](https://captimes.com/news/government/lobbyists-wisconsin-health-care-workers-shortage-could-drive-bipartisan-action/article_c1821744-f89d-502d-a9ce-eb4e998dc13e.html)

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.uwhealth.org/news/wisconsin-medicines-addresses-workforce-shortages>

<sup>7</sup> [https://www.wxow.com/news/healthcare-worker-shortage-to-be-dire-by-2030-report-says/article\\_1189c240-cdb9-11ed-900f-9bb0dda45308.html](https://www.wxow.com/news/healthcare-worker-shortage-to-be-dire-by-2030-report-says/article_1189c240-cdb9-11ed-900f-9bb0dda45308.html)





Making licensure portability simpler and more streamlined will allow providers and patients to fully capitalize on the benefits of telehealth technology and bring more highly qualified providers into the state. This, in turn, will significantly increase patients' access to care – including by decreasing wait and travel times, offering more convenient appointments for patients, and offering more native language services. All of these factors will ultimately lower cost pressures on the entire health care sector, leading to system-wide cost savings due to effective diversion from the emergency departments and urgent care centers, lower rates of chronic conditions by catching and treating those diseases early, and overall cost savings with telehealth economies of scale and a higher supply of providers.

To date, several states have adopted licensure portability models outside of the various licensure compacts, including: Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Idaho, Kansas, Minnesota, South Carolina, and West Virginia.

While the pre-pandemic fears that licensure reciprocity would lead to an increase in patient complaints and injuries, a 2023 study found no examples of licensing agencies taking disciplinary action against out-of-state telehealth providers for patient safety issues.<sup>8</sup> Furthermore, on the issue of increasing the health care workforce, the research found that Florida increased their total provider count by 14,000, with thousands of those providers being doctors and mental health providers. To be sure, should the need for enforcement or disciplinary actions arise, the various Wisconsin state agencies, courts, and licensing boards will continue to have jurisdiction over all health care professionals practicing in the State of Wisconsin.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide Teladoc Health's unique insights on this important piece of legislation. It is our hope that the Committee will pass SB214. Please do not hesitate to contact me at [mercer.may@teladochealth.com](mailto:mercer.may@teladochealth.com) with any questions or concerns you may have.

Sincerely,

Wm. Mercer May, Esq.  
Teladoc Health  
Director of State Government Affairs

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<sup>8</sup> <https://ciceroinstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Few-Disciplinary-Issues-with-Out-of-State-Telehealth-Report.pdf>



Michael C. Melnyk, Ph.D.  
Vice President - Quality  
920.237.9271 | michael.melnik@plexus.com



June 04 2025

Members of the Senate Committee on Health

Re: Support for Senate Bill 214

Dear Members of the Committee:

My name is Michael C. Melnyk and I am currently the Vice President of Quality for Plexus based in Neenah, WI. I have been married to my wife, Dana, for over 31 years and we have two (2) adult children; Maddie (22) and Charlie (21) who are both on the autism spectrum. Our son, Charlie, has also had a number of additional medical challenges which necessitated multiple surgeries in his first two (2) years of life. He was also diagnosed with bi-polar disorder in his early teens.

Prior to relocating to Wisconsin in 2023, our family resided in Marietta, Georgia for over fifteen (15) years. During this time, we were blessed with finding tremendous physicians who were able to help us through these difficult challenges with both of our children. Given the need to remain with our doctors in Georgia, we were limited in our ability to relocate during this time period.

I am writing in support of Bill 214 which would allow for the registration of out-of-state health care providers to provide telehealth services. This legislation would provide tremendous relief and opportunities for families like ours who would like to be able to take advantage of career opportunities that require relocation but are limited due to the inability to leave their current physicians. In addition, this legislation would also provide access to physicians with specializations that may not be currently available in Wisconsin.

I would like to thank all the members of the Senate Committee on Health for their time and consideration in affording me the opportunity to voice my support for Bill 214 and I would respectfully ask the committee for their support as well.

SINCERELY,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael C. Melnyk", written in a cursive style.

Michael C. Melnyk, Ph.D.  
Vice President - Quality  
920.237.9217 | michael.melnik@plexus.com