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Multi-Stakeholder Coalition Applauds the inclusion of Senator Daines' *Telehealth Expansion Act* in the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act*, H.R. 748

Washington, DC – Today, the Senate released updated language for the *Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act* ([CARES Act](#)), to include S. 3539, [the Telehealth Expansion Act](#), a bill recently introduced by Senator Steve Daines. The bill is expected to pass both houses of Congress and be signed by the president this week.

The Smarter Health Care Coalition applauds the inclusion of S. 3539, which amends the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to allow employers and health plans to cover telehealth services pre-deductible in Health Savings Account-eligible high deductible health plans during this health care crisis. Prior to its inclusion in the CARES Act, The Coalition had voiced strong support for the bill in [a letter](#) sent last week to Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell and Senate Democratic Leader Charles Schumer.

This bill expands upon previously issued IRS guidance ([Notice 2020-15](#)) by allowing employers and health plans to cover important telehealth benefits pre-deductible in all instances. The Coalition also applauds the inclusion of two additional sections: section 3201, which ensures all COVID-19 testing will be covered without cost-sharing, and section 3203, which ensures health plans will cover, without cost-sharing, “qualifying coronavirus preventive services”— any item, service, or immunization that is intended to prevent or mitigate COVID-19. These provisions represent the foundation of value-based insurance design – coverage of high-value health care with no or minimal cost-sharing, and the Coalition appreciates the tireless bipartisan and bicameral efforts to finalize this critically important legislation.

The Smarter Health Care Coalition represents a broad-based and diverse group of health care innovators, including consumer groups, employers, provider-related organizations, health plans, trade associations, academia centers and professors, foundations, and life science companies. Our goal is to leverage our combined perspectives and experiences to achieve smarter health care that improves the patient experience, particularly through integrating benefit design innovations and consumer/patient engagement within broader delivery system reform in order to better align coverage, quality, and value-based payment goals. For more information, visit www.smarterhc.org.

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