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February 5, 2021

The Honorable Mike Thompson
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Peter Welch
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Doris Matsui
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Schweikert
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bill Johnson
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Representatives Thompson, Schweikert, Welch, Johnson, and Matsui,

The American Academy of Neurology (AAN) is the world's largest neurology specialty society representing more than 36,000 neurologists and clinical neuroscience professionals. The AAN is dedicated to promoting the highest quality patient-centered neurologic care. A neurologist is a physician with specialized training in diagnosing, treating, and managing disorders of the brain and nervous system. These disorders affect one in six people and include conditions such as multiple sclerosis (MS), Alzheimer's disease, Parkinson's disease, stroke, migraine, epilepsy, traumatic brain injury, ALS, and spinal muscular atrophy.

The AAN thanks you for your continued efforts and leadership in support of expanding patient access to care via telehealth. Like many other industries, the COVID-19 pandemic has forced neurology practices around the country to dramatically reshape their delivery of care for the vulnerable populations they treat. Telehealth has become an essential method of delivering care for most neurologists, which has only been possible due to the reforms spearheaded by Congress, along with the broad interpretation of these provisions by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS). We commend your work to retain health care access for patients regardless of their location or circumstances with the introduction of H.R. 633, the Protecting Access to Post-COVID-19 Telehealth Act.

While the diagnosis and treatment of COVID-19 remains a top priority for physicians, patients requiring routine neurologic care are relying on telehealth to safely communicate with their physician care teams from home. The AAN appreciates that your legislation builds upon actions already taken by Congress to ensure that all patients are able to maintain a stable relationship with their physician after the completion of the public health emergency declaration regardless of circumstances. It is imperative that telehealth services are accessible to all patients and that there are no restrictions on patient location nor on conditions allowed to be treated and monitored remotely. We also applaud you for also including provisions in the legislation to waive Medicare telehealth requirements during the public health emergency and for 90 days after its conclusion.

As we all continue to navigate this new public health environment, access to health care services should not be diminished due to unique circumstances or patient location. The AAN thanks you for working diligently to make telehealth more accessible to patients during and following the COVID-19 crisis.

If you have any questions or requests for additional information, please contact Derek Brandt, AAN's Director, Congressional Affairs, at dbrandt@aan.com, or Jessica Greene, AAN's Manager, Health Policy, jgreene@aan.com.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "James C. Stevens MD." The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looped initial "J".

Sincerely,
James C. Stevens, MD, FAAN
President, American Academy of Neurology