

# FINAL BILL REPORT

## SSB 6399

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C 283 L 18  
Synopsis as Enacted

**Brief Description:** Concerning telemedicine payment parity.

**Sponsors:** Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care (originally sponsored by Senators Becker, Cleveland, Rivers, Brown, Bailey, Fain, Kuderer and Van De Wege).

**Senate Committee on Health & Long Term Care**  
**House Committee on Health Care & Wellness**

**Background:** In 2015, the Legislature established requirements for health insurance payments for services delivered through telemedicine and store and forward technology. The legislation established originating sites for a telemedicine service including a hospital, rural health clinic, federally qualified health center, health care provider's office, community mental health center, skilled nursing facility, or renal dialysis center. In 2016, the Legislature added the patient's home.

The American Telemedicine Association indicates that approximately 30 states have some form of telemedicine laws that require parity in insurance payments for some services or some programs.

**Summary:** The Collaborative for the Advancement of Telemedicine (Collaborative) is directed to review the concept of telemedicine payment parity and develop recommendations on reimbursing for telemedicine at the same rate as if a provider provided services in person for treatment of diabetes mellitus, stroke, mental health conditions, opioid dependence, and chronic pain. The Collaborative must review methodologies, including whether and to what extent facility fees should be reimbursed, for reimbursement of telemedicine services. The recommendations must include parameters for a three to five year payment parity pilot program, and must outline procedures for the Collaborative, in conjunction with the Office of Financial Management, to analyze claim data in the all-payer claims database to see if any savings or increased utilization is realized through the pilot.

The Collaborative must also design a training program to teach health care professionals about telemedicine and proper billing.

The Collaborative must report its recommendations to the Legislature by December 1, 2018.

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*This analysis was prepared by non-partisan legislative staff for the use of legislative members in their deliberations. This analysis is not a part of the legislation nor does it constitute a statement of legislative intent.*

**Votes on Final Passage:**

Senate 47 0

House 98 0

**Effective:** June 7, 2018