

PO Box 2291, Durham, NC 27702-2291

September 9, 2021

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Senator Joyce Krawiec
300 N. Salisbury Street
Room 308
Raleigh, NC 27603

Senator Ralph Hise
300 N. Salisbury Street
Room 300-A
Raleigh, NC 27603

Senator Jim Burgin
300 N. Salisbury St
Room 620
Raleigh, NC 27603

Rep. Donna White
300 N. Salisbury Street
Room 307
Raleigh, NC 27603

Rep. Gale Adcock
16 West Jones St
Room 1213
Raleigh, NC 27601

Rep. Carla Cunningham
300 N. Salisbury St
Room 403
Raleigh, NC 27603

Rep. Diane Wheatley
300 N. Salisbury Street
Room 536
Raleigh, NC 27603

Dear Senators Krawiec, Hise and Burgin and Representatives White, Adcock, Cunningham and Wheatley,

Blue Cross NC applauds efforts to lower health care costs and improve access to care. Although we do not normally weigh in on provider scope and licensing bills, health care costs in North Carolina, especially anesthesia charges, are some of the highest in the country and we need to find solutions that make care more affordable and more accessible for North Carolinians. We support efforts like the SAVE Act (Senate Bill 249/House Bill 277) that aim to move health care to lower cost settings and improve access, while retaining the quality our members deserve. It is an example of the legislature working on North Carolina-specific solutions to improve healthcare in our state.

In 2020, in the middle of a pandemic, use of mid-level providers such as advanced practice registered nurses saved Blue Cross NC members approximately \$60 million. Like Senate [Bill 345, PA – Team-Based Practice](#), where providers came together to allow physician assistants in team-based settings to practice without supervision, we encourage stakeholders to find as soon as possible a path to allowing mid-level providers to more fully utilize their training and abilities.

In addition to measures that enable North Carolina to fully access care, we know more can be done to address difficult issues such as high costs and access to care. The North Carolina legislature has recognized this by trying to address surprise billing, worked on ways to increase competition among providers, and passed legislation that gives more health insurance options to individuals and employers.

We applaud efforts to resist costly mandates like telehealth parity that rely on old fee-for-service models that drive up utilization and instead seek North Carolina-based solutions that focus on quality and access. Health care costs are too high in this state and our customers, which include individuals, families, and large and small employers, deserve solutions that make healthcare more affordable and more accessible.

Sincerely,

Chris Evans
Director of State Legislative and Regulatory Affairs

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