

116TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. _____

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to simplify payments for telehealth services furnished by Federally qualified health centers or rural health clinics under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mrs. HYDE-SMITH (for herself and Mr. KING) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

A BILL

To amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to simplify payments for telehealth services furnished by Federally qualified health centers or rural health clinics under the Medicare program, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Improving Telehealth
5 for Underserved Communities Act of 2020”.

1 **SEC. 2. SIMPLIFYING PAYMENTS FOR TELEHEALTH SERV-**
2 **ICES FURNISHED BY FEDERALLY QUALIFIED**
3 **HEALTH CENTERS OR RURAL HEALTH CLIN-**
4 **ICS.**

5 (a) IN GENERAL.—Section 1834(m)(8)(B) of the So-
6 cial Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1395m(m)(8)(B)) is amended
7 to read as follows:

8 “(B) PAYMENT.—The Secretary shall pay
9 to a Federally qualified health center or rural
10 health clinic serving as a distant site that fur-
11 nishes a telehealth service to an eligible tele-
12 health individual an amount equal to the
13 amount that such Federally qualified health
14 center or rural health clinic would have been
15 paid under the payment methodology described
16 in section 1834(o) or section 1833(a)(3), re-
17 spectively, had such service been furnished
18 without the use of a telecommunications sys-
19 tem. Costs associated with the delivery of such
20 services by a Federally qualified health center
21 or rural health clinic serving as a distant site
22 pursuant to this paragraph shall be considered
23 allowable costs for purposes of the payment
24 methodologies described in the previous sen-
25 tence.”.

1 (b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by
2 subsection (a) shall apply with respect to payments for
3 telehealth services furnished on or after the first day of
4 the emergency period described in section 1135(g)(1)(B)
5 of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C. 1320b–5(g)(1)(B)).

6 **SEC. 3. INCREASING LIMITS ON PAYMENT FOR RURAL**
7 **HEALTH CLINIC SERVICES.**

8 Section 1833(f) of the Social Security Act (42 U.S.C.
9 1395l(f)) is amended—

10 (1) in paragraph (1), by striking “, and” and
11 inserting a semicolon;

12 (2) in paragraph (2)—

13 (A) by inserting “(before 2020)” after
14 “subsequent year”; and

15 (B) by striking the period at the end and
16 inserting a semicolon; and

17 (3) by adding at the end the following new
18 paragraphs:

19 “(3) in 2020, at \$92.03 per visit; and

20 “(4) in a subsequent year, at the limit estab-
21 lished under this subsection for the previous year in-
22 creased by the percentage increase in the MEI (as
23 so defined) applicable to primary care services (as so
24 defined) furnished as of the first day of that year.”.