April 26, 2016

Assemblymember Lorena Gonzalez  
Chair of the Assembly Committee on Appropriations  
State Capitol  
Sacramento, CA  95814

RE:  AB 2507 (GORDON) Telehealth: Access – SUPPORT

Dear Chair and Members of the Assembly Committee on Appropriations:

On behalf of CLSA’s more than 750 members spanning the biotechnology, pharmaceutical, medical device sectors of healthcare, among others, I am writing to express our support for AB 2507 (Gordon). This bill removes barriers to health care services via telehealth by improving patient access to providers, as well as improving both choice and convenience.

Rapid developments in the delivery of health care via telehealth have been recognized as legitimate means by which an individual may receive health care services. However, current law insufficiently guarantees that health care providers be reimbursed for telehealth services. As a result, health insurers may deny coverage to patients looking to benefit from telehealth services and thus, providers are unable to develop sustainable telehealth programs for a larger patient population.

With millions of Californians enjoying access to insurance coverage, and our healthcare delivery system stretched to capacity, it is important that we find innovative ways to ensure timely and affordable access to care. Encouraging payment to physicians who provide medical advice to patients via electronic information or telecommunications, as an alternative to face-to-face provider evaluations, is a good mechanism to extend the delivery of care. AB 2507 removes barriers to healthcare services provided via telehealth and requires health insurers to include coverage and reimbursement for services provided to a patient through telehealth. This will further streamline the process for providers to communicate with patients, which would reduce overall healthcare costs and improve access to care.

For the reasons above, we respectfully request an “Aye” vote on AB 2507.

Sincerely,

Eve Bukowski, Vice President of State Government Relations  
California Life Sciences Association