January 24, 2024

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
455 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Cassidy:

On behalf of Patient Access Network (PAN) Foundation and the patients and families we support, I write to express our support for the *Telemental Health Care Access Act*. We thank you for your leadership in introducing legislation to eliminate an unnecessary barrier for Medicare beneficiaries in accessing mental and behavioral health services through telehealth. Resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, we have learned the importance of telehealth in providing access to these critically important services.

PAN is an independent, national 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to helping federally and commercially insured people living with life-threatening, chronic, and rare diseases with the out-of-pocket (OOP) costs for their prescribed medications. PAN provides patients with direct assistance through more than 70 disease-specific programs and collaborates with national patient advocacy organizations to provide patients with education and additional support. Since 2004, we have helped more than 1 million underinsured patients.

PAN believes that barriers to telehealth for mental and behavioral health services should be minimal. PAN strongly supports the removal of the 6-month in-person visit requirement and believes it should be left up to the treating clinician to determine the best interval for their patients to be seen in person if needed. Given the mental health workforce shortage, telehealth is an important option for patients with transportation challenges or long distances to travel that are significant barriers to seeking and maintaining mental health care.

The PAN Foundation appreciates your commitment to removing barriers and expanding access to mental health services. We welcome the opportunity to work with you to advance this important bill and be a resource to you. Please don’t hesitate to contact Amy Niles, Chief Advocacy and Engagement Officer at aniles@panfoundation.org.

Sincerely,

Kevin L. Hagan
President and Chief Executive Officer

panfoundation.org