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September 19, 2011

The Honorable Edmund G. Brown, Jr.
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

RE: AB 415 (Logue) - REQUEST FOR SIGNATURE

Dear Governor Brown:

On behalf of the University of California (UC), I respectfully request your signature on AB 415, which will remove barriers in current law and update to current practice the use of telehealth in the delivery of health care.

The University operates academic medical centers at the Davis, Los Angeles, Irvine, San Diego, and San Francisco campuses – as well as trains health professionals in the nation's largest health sciences and medical training program through schools/programs on seven UC campuses. UC has long been a leader in telehealth and telemedicine, with clinical faculty across the system having provided thousands of telehealth consultations to date.

We believe that by implementing several recommendations from the Center for Connected Health Policy's Telehealth Model Statute Report, that AB 415 will advance the state's interest in expanding telehealth access for the benefit of all Californians.

Building upon national and state initiatives in telehealth, broadband access and health information exchange, UC is leveraging its leadership to extend the reach of UC health care expertise. Three major initiatives are currently underway within the UC system to expand the use of telehealth technologies and expertise throughout the state.

The first of these is the California Telehealth Network (CTN), created with funding from the Federal Communications Commission (FCC) and several major California investors. In the next several years, CTN expects that it will link more than 800 qualified sites into a peer-to-peer network which will be one of the largest dedicated broadband networks to support medical care in the nation. The second telehealth initiative is funded under Proposition 1D (2006), and is enabling expansion of existing telemedicine programs at UC medical school campuses to provide facilities and state-of-the-art equipment needed to expand the use of telemedicine across the state. Finally, the Specialty Care Safety Net Initiative, a program administered by the Center for Connected Health Policy, is a collaborative effort between UC

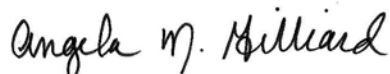
medical school specialty departments and safety net clinics in California to identify barriers that prevent widespread adoption and sustainability of telehealth programs, and focuses on care delivery in high-need specialties.

Last year, UC faculty and staff collaborated with colleagues around the state and nation to work with the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid (CMS) to revise regulations related to the credentialing and privileging process. The CMS Conditions of Participation that governed these processes were adopted long before telehealth was ever contemplated as a mechanism to provide care. Thus, updates adopted in July 2011 provide for an efficient mechanism for telehealth providers to comply with credentialing and privileging requirements. AB 415 includes language to ensure that California's Title 22 regulations are consistent with CMS Conditions of Participation. This was a significant barrier in California and the solution offered by this bill is essential to the advancement of the field of telehealth.

The University recognizes and appreciates Assembly Member Logue's leadership in this important area. The measures proposed by this legislation are important to advance a policy environment consistent with California's commitment to deploy broadband technology to improve healthcare access and quality.

Should you have any questions concerning the University's position on this bill, please do not hesitate to contact me at (916) 445-9924.

Sincerely,



Angela Gilliard, JD
Legislative Director

cc: Assembly Member Dan Logue
President Mark G. Yudof
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