



CONGRESSWOMAN

**SUSIE LEE**

SERVING NEVADA'S 3RD DISTRICT

# VA Telehealth Expansion Act

We cannot let this pandemic compromise health care services for our veterans and servicemembers. Because of COVID-19, telehealth video visits at VA have increased by over 1,000 percent between March and June of this year. Even though VA has expanded their telehealth capacity, many veterans still have limited access to telehealth services. There's clearly no time for excuses. It's our responsibility to adapt to the changes thrown our way. Our bipartisan bill will make sure that local VA facilities have the capacity and the technology to provide telehealth services, and that veterans in all communities have access to the quality health services they've earned.

## Background

The [VA Telehealth Expansion Act](#) would improve and expand telehealth services for veterans at the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. This bill seeks to close some of the gaps in access to VA telehealth care by allowing VA to provide grants to outside partners creating and upgrading technology access points for veterans.

## Health Care Access for Veterans

The grants provided by this bill would allow VA to upgrade remote technology access for veteran patients. While VA has expanded its telehealth services since the beginning of the pandemic, many veterans—especially those in rural and/or medically underserved areas—still have limited broadband access. VA has seen a 1,086% increase in telehealth visits between March and June of this year, while the Southern Nevada VA Health Care System (SNVAHS) saw an even higher 1,738% increase in video visits between March 1<sup>st</sup> and July 25<sup>th</sup>.

## Resources for Local VA Health Care Facilities

Congress appropriated over \$2 billion to support VA information technology for the pandemic response in the CARES Act, but with COVID-19 still on the rise, there is a clear need for additional support for VA telehealth services. This bill would help expand VA's telehealth capabilities by providing grants to outside partners creating and upgrading technology access points for veterans.

## Bipartisan Support

Rep. Lee introduced the VA Telehealth Expansion with Republican colleague Jim Banks (Ind.-03). As chair and ranking member, respectively, of the House Veterans' Affairs Subcommittee on Technology Modernization, Reps. Lee and Banks actively set aside party politics, and regularly work together to move policy forward that supports and improves veteran health care services.