

# NAHC Advocacy Scores Wins in Congress

Source: NAHC, May 10, 2024

**Washington, D.C.** – This has been a good week for providers of care at home. Tireless advocacy by the National Association for Home Care & Hospice (NAHC) and our partners at the National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, has resulted in the approval of the [Preserving Telehealth, Hospital, and Ambulance Access Act](#) (H.R. 8261) through the Ways & Means Committee of the U.S. House of Representatives.

While the committee advanced the legislation, it will still need to be passed by the full House of Representatives and the Senate as well. This first step was crucial to get the bill on the pathway to its ultimate enactment into law.

This legislation provides:

- a two-year extension for removal of geographic and originating site restrictions, allowing for the face-to-face home health certification to be accomplished with telehealth,
- a two-year extension of the hospice re-certification with workable guardrails,
- a five-year extension of the hospital at home program, and
- a mandate for the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (CMS) to collect face-to-face visit data.

The hospital at home program originated during the COVID-19 public health emergency, and opportunity to expand care delivery in the home.

The legislation is an important acknowledgement of the vital role telehealth plays, particularly in rural and densely populated urban areas.

NAHC's careful work with the Ways & Means Committee staff successfully prevented potential hospice payment cuts, ensuring that the care at home community can continue to provide high quality care to our nation's elderly, disabled, and seriously ill in their own homes and communities.

“Considering the enormous and growing importance of health care at home to the larger health care continuum, it's vital to ensure adequate funding and to continue

to modernize care delivery, utilizing new technologies to deliver care to everyone who needs it,” said NAHC President William A. Dombi.

NAHC would like to thank the committee members who supported the legislation, especially sponsors Dave Schweikert (R-AZ-28) and Mike Thompson (D-CA-4). In addition, NAHC extends its gratitude to Rep. Brad Wenstrup and Earl Blumenauer for their leadership on hospital at home.

While this is an important milestone, the fight for this legislation is not complete and NAHC will remain engaged until it is won.

Also in the House of Representatives, a [letter signed by 40 bipartisan members of Congress was sent to CMS](#), asking the agency for updates and answers to a series of important questions about its work to address ongoing hospice fraud and program integrity challenges in certain parts of the country. Led by Representatives Earl Blumenauer and Beth Van Duyne, two stalwart hospice champions who have led recent efforts to shore up oversight gaps, the letter keeps the momentum up on a targeted and effective crackdown on bad actors who are exploiting and abusing the hospice benefit and the patients and families that rely on it for end-of-life care. NAHC was proud to help garner support for this letter, and we are grateful to Reps Blumenauer and Van Duyne for their leadership, and to all the members who signed-on to the effort.