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To: The Honorable Charles McCall, Speaker of the House of Representatives
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The Honorable Jon Echols, House Majority Floor Leader
The Honorable Kim David, Senate Majority Floor Leader
The Honorable Emily Virgin, House Minority Leader
The Honorable Kay Floyd, Senate Minority Leader

From: George Monks, MD, President, Oklahoma State Medical Association

Date: April 28, 2020

Re: Priority Health Related Measures

As the State Legislature prepares to soon return to the Capitol and consider the FY2021 budget as well as other priority issues, the Oklahoma State Medical Association (OSMA) would like to offer our top supported health care related issues and measures for possible action:

- **Liability Limits** – As we continue to deal with the uncertainty brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, physicians and as well as other professional health care providers and facilities are faced with unforeseen decisions dealing with diagnosis and treatment. Some medical providers may be stepping out of their traditional specialty in order to provide much needed immediate care. Liability limits placed upon these providers are necessary in order to foster the greatest unencumbered care without legal liability implications.
- **SJR 40 (Daniels/Sanders)** – Creates a State Question reinstating a cap on non-economic damages. The Supreme Court recently struck down eight years' worth of established caps. The medical community now faces the possible negative impact excessive litigation may bring to physicians as well as other medical professionals and facilities; especially when considering the COVID-19 pandemic when medical professionals are faced with many unknowns.
- **SB 1718 (Montgomery/Echols)** – Provides parity for mental health insurance coverage by mirroring current federal law. This would better allow Oklahoma enforcement to require mental health care to be covered at the same level as physical health care on plans authorized by the state. Mental health has been negatively impacted by the current COVID-19 pandemic in which we all face.
- **SB 1823 (Stanley/Roe)** – Provides for oversight and licensing of midwifery and establishes their scope of practice. When considering the impact of COVID-19, many families are extremely concerned with going to the hospital for any procedure; especially when their newborn may be negatively affected.
- **SB 1556 (Newhouse/McEntire)** – Requires insurance companies to address the specific details of a physician appeal in any clean claim re-denial and provide specific contact information to expediate communication. COVID-19 will most likely bring an overabundance of denied claims and confusion in coverage. This measure is supported or unopposed by the medical community, health insurance community and insurance regulators and will help advance claims in question.

- **Oklahoma State Department of Health Rules** – The new health related rules established and presented to the legislature by the Oklahoma State Department of Health should remain intact as submitted. The importance of public health has skyrocketed to the pinnacle of consideration when deliberating what is important to Oklahoma’s economy.

On behalf of the Oklahoma State Medical Association’s nearly 4,000 physician, resident and medical student members, we appreciate your consideration. Thank you for representing Oklahomans during this challenging time.