



A driving force for health equity



**California
Telehealth
Network**

An OCHIN organization

Submitted via electronic mail

March 15, 2023

The Honorable Carlos Villapudua
1021 O St
State Capitol, Room 6340
Sacramento, CA 95814-4900

Re: Support for AB 564

Dear Assemblymember Villapudua,

On behalf of OCHIN and the California Telehealth Network (CTN), I appreciate the opportunity to offer support for AB 564, which would direct the Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) to authorize the use of electronic signatures (eSignatures) for provider enrollment forms in order to drive efficiency and reduce paperwork burden on providers and agency staff.

OCHIN is a [national health information technology and research network](#) that offers technology solutions, informatics, evidence-based research, and policy insights. In California, OCHIN network members serve 1.6 million active patients, more than 500,000 of whom are Medi-Cal enrollees. For over two decades, OCHIN has advanced health care solutions by leveraging the strength of our network's unique data set and the practical experience of our members to drive technology innovation for patients and providers in rural and other underserved communities. CTN is a leading consortium of organizations focused on increasing access to healthcare through telehealth platforms, education, and affordable broadband throughout the State.

Increasingly, health centers and physician practices have been transitioning to new electronic health record systems to secure essential functionality to comply with new health information exchange requirements, digital reporting, population health management, and the enhanced care management requirements of CalAIM. These transitions are costly and complex due to the antiquated paperwork requirements of the Medi-Cal program. Currently, when health centers and other providers transition to new electronic health record systems, Medi-Cal requires a 'wet' signature on two provider enrollment forms. These requirements are time-consuming and involve costly shipping and staff coordination, often resulting in significant delays. These burdens fall heaviest on providers in underserved communities, waste scarce State agency staff time and public resources, and contribute to a larger carbon footprint.

Modernizing Medi-Cal to allow digital signatures on enrollment forms is critical to advancing the adoption of health care technology, technology that will result in greater efficiency, reduced costs, and, most importantly, improved access and health outcomes for patients. Please contact me at stollj@ochin.org to discuss how we can collaborate to direct DHCS to address this antiquated requirement on behalf of health centers and physician practices.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Jennifer Stoll". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jennifer Stoll
Executive Vice President
External Affairs