



Trevor J. Cleveland, O.D.

Nicole S. Crossland, O.D.

Bethany L. Thompson, O.D.

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February 9, 2021

Health Care Committee

Oregon House of Representatives

900 Court Street NE, H489

Salem, OR 97301

Dear Health Care Committee:

Please consider my support for [HB2541](#). This bill will allow Optometric Physicians in Oregon to practice to the highest level of their education and training while updating certain statutory provisions in state law for Doctors of Optometry. Ultimately, these updates will provide greater access for patients to better receive the timely often critical care they need.

Today, most of primary eye care is provided by a Doctor of Optometry and the number of vision related problems in the U.S. are projected to increase by an astounding 65% in the coming years. If scope is lags behind, 99.9% of the population (with direct access to optometric physicians) is denied routine high-quality care in Oregon communities and must incur the added expense of referrals to specialists whose offices are often significant distances away and/or result in long wait times between office visits. This results in the unnecessary duplication of care and lost time from work, school and other daily obligations for families across the state.

In a report released in 2018 by the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) findings concluded, "States should consider changes to their scope of practice statutes to allow all health care providers to practice to the top of their license, utilizing their full skill set." Currently, five states - Alaska, Arkansas, Louisiana, Kentucky, and Oklahoma, permit ophthalmic surgical procedures, YAG laser capsulotomy and trabeculoplasty, under their scope of practice acts. Taking this into account and stretching as far back as 1998 in the case of Oklahoma, there have been no malpractice judgements against optometrists related to these procedures or those proposed in [HB2541](#).

Doctors of optometry are on the front lines of eye health and vision care. In addition to providing comprehensive vision care, we also manage the entire spectrum of ocular diseases. As a legislated profession, our ability to manage these conditions appropriately requires occasional modifications to the scope of practice defined in Oregon Revised Statutes. Technology and optometric training have changed to the point that it is now time to update Oregon statutes to reflect these changes.

Thank you very much for your time and consideration of this issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you might have. (541)232-3238C

Warm Regards,

Dr. Trevor J. Cleveland

Optometric Physician

Springfield, Oregon

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840 A Street  
Springfield, OR  
97477

phone (541)747-0616  
fax (541)747-0617  
[www.completevisioncenter.com](http://www.completevisioncenter.com)