



February 10, 2021

House Health Care Committee
Oregon House of Representatives
900 Court Street NE, H-489
Salem, OR 97301

RE: Support for HB 2541

Dear House Health Care Committee:

We write to you today in support of [HB2541](#), on behalf of the optometric physicians practicing at Lifetime Vision Care in Deschutes County. We serve patients of all ages, backgrounds, and socioeconomic statuses in a primary eye care setting. We see patients daily with a variety of vision and eye health concerns, and every day encounter a patient with complex eye care needs.

This bill allows Doctors of Optometry to practice to their highest level of education and training. Updating certain statutory provisions, while removing other unnecessary barriers in state law for Doctors of Optometry, is critical in keeping up with the rigorous education and clinical training that primary eye and vision care providers receive today. Ultimately, these updates will provide greater access in the healthcare marketplace for patients to better receive the timely, qualified and often critical care they need.

The majority of primary eye care is provided by Doctors of Optometry. There is a need outside of Deschutes County for rural access to care. We are fortunate to have ophthalmology in our county for ease of geographical access. We are also interested in giving timely access to our patients to avoid having another office visit, another copay, and delayed time to treatment. This bill will not change patients' access to ophthalmology, yet broaden the opportunity for access to both optometrists and ophthalmologists for treatment.

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. Oregon is fortunate to have Pacific University College of Optometry in our own state, who ensures all students



have the highest level of training in order to be able to perform ophthalmic surgical procedures allowed by HB2541. Updating our statutes would also keep highly trained and qualified practitioners in our state to serve our patients.

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.

Optometry and ophthalmology will continue to work together and co-manage with patient needs being our top priority. Optometry has a proven track record of doing what is best for the patient and HB2541 will not change that commitment we made in our oath. It is for the reasons listed above that we support Doctors of Optometry practicing to their full educational authority. 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.

Sincerely,

Dr. Derri Sandberg
Optometric Physician

Dr. Brock Karben
Optometric Physician

Dr. Matthew Sisson
Optometric Physician