

Submitter: David McBride
On Behalf Of: Oregon Optometric Physician Association
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2204

Members of the House committee of Behavioral Health and Health Care,
I am an optometric physician practicing in Beaverton, and I am reaching out to ask for your support in the passage of HB 2204. The bill removes the requirement that optometric physicians have hospital consulting privileges to qualify for a rural tax credit. This legislation won't affect me personally or my practice, it will enhance access for rural Oregonians to receive much needed primary eye care. To compete with more populated areas in acquiring physicians, rural communities rely upon financial incentives such as tax credits and student loan forgiveness. To function as intended, tax credits must be easily accessible. The requirement to have a hospital affiliation is an unnecessary barrier to many optometric physicians in rural communities. The credentialing process is arduous. It can take months or even years for small rural hospitals to establish criteria for new providers, and they often have little or no motivation to do so. We support expanding access to rural healthcare and HB 2204 is a positive step forward. Thank you for your support!