

Submitter:	Amber Dunn
On Behalf Of:	Optometrist in Oregon
Committee:	House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic:	HB2204

I am writing to ask for your support in passing HB 2204, an important bill that will help strengthen access to eye care in rural Oregon. As an optometric physician practicing in our state, I have seen firsthand the challenges that rural communities face in attracting and retaining healthcare providers.

One of the key tools for recruiting doctors to these underserved areas is the rural tax credit, which helps offset financial burdens and makes rural practice more viable. However, the current requirement that optometric physicians must hold hospital consulting privileges to qualify for this credit creates an unnecessary roadblock.

Many rural hospitals lack an established process for granting consulting privileges to optometrists, and the credentialing process can take months—sometimes years—with no guarantee of approval. As a result, this requirement often excludes optometrists who are fully committed to serving rural patients. By removing this barrier, HB 2204 ensures that rural communities can continue to receive the essential eye care they need.

Oregon must do everything possible to encourage doctors to practice in underserved areas, and HB 2204 is a meaningful step in that direction. I urge you to support this bill and help make rural healthcare more accessible for all.

Thank you for your time and consideration. Please feel free to reach out if you would like any additional insight from the perspective of a practicing optometrist.