

Submitter: Derek Louie
On Behalf Of:
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB2204

I am an optometric physician practicing in Oregon 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 in order to qualify for a rural tax credit.

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.

As someone who is directly responsible for recruiting optometrist to rural practice settings over the past 5+ years, I can attest that increased incentives by removing this hospital credentialing barrier may help to fill currently open positions in these areas.

I support expanding access to rural healthcare and HB 2204 is a positive step forward. Thank you for your support