

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

I am asking for you to support HB2204, as an optometric physician practising in Oregon. The bill removes the requirement that optometric physicians have hospital consulting privileges in order to qualify for a rural tax credit. Although I practice in Portland, I support my rural colleagues' financial need which this bill would help. Rural physicians need access to financial incentives such as tax credits and student loan forgiveness more than those of us practising in urban areas. These tax credits should be easy to access and the requirement for hospital affiliation is a barrier to many optometric physicians, who are serving our rural communities. Getting hospital affiliation can be arduous, taking months or years for the small rural hospitals to credential and affiliate new providers; often there are inter-species politics where MDs fight against ODs to keep the latter from getting affiliated. And the rural hospital often has little or no motivation to grant affiliation to ODs. HB 2204 would be a positive step forward to help my rural colleagues expand access to healthcare in rural communities.

Thank you for your support!