

Feb 9, 2023

Dear Senator/Representative,

I am writing to you regarding legislation to remove limitations on legend drugs put forth by Optometry as submitted in HF1031 and SF 689.

As a practicing board certified Ophthalmologist (MD) in Minnesota for the past 22 years, I work closely with many Doctors of Optometry (OD) on a daily basis. I work with Optometrists in both an MD/OD internally integrated private practice setting, as well as external co-management arrangements. I have found my Optometric colleagues to have well-grounded clinical judgment, mature diagnostic acumen, and patient centered decision making.

Many patients are required to make multiple doctor visits with both ODs and MDs for the same condition because of our system of restricted practice, thereby duplicating unnecessary patient care costs. Furthermore, surrounding states that have eliminated limitations on oral medications have not seen a consequential increase in adverse patient care or malpractice rates as a result of similar legislation.

I recommend that the prescribing limits on oral antivirals, carbonic anhydrase inhibitors, and the exclusion of oral steroids is no longer necessary and that removal would allow for increased access to quality eye care for Minnesota residents.

((Please note, I am not advocating that Optometrists be given privileges to practice surgical or laser-based procedures.))

As you consider this proposed legislation, patient care and access should be the primary focus. I hope that my opinion will help in your consideration of the proposed Optometric Scope of Practice Legislation. If you would like to discuss this legislation further, please feel free to contact me at 763 772 7173 or via email at mlobanoff@gmail.com

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Mark Lobanoff', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Mark Lobanoff, MD