

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: No fiscal impact

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed
Vote:	4 - 1 - 0
Yeas:	Carter, Gordly, Courtney, Monnes Anderson
Nays:	Kruse
Exc.:	0
Prepared By:	Shannon Strumpfer, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	4/11

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Modifies circumstances under which optometrist must refer patient being treated for glaucoma to ophthalmologist. Recognizes certain existing statutory provisions.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Prevalence of glaucoma in African-American population
- Scope of practice versus medical protocol

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Deletes the requirement that an optometrist must, under specified conditions, refer a patient to an ophthalmologist and instead requires optometrist to consult with an ophthalmologist.

BACKGROUND: Glaucoma is usually associated with elevated pressure in the eye. This pressure leads to damage to the optic nerve. Glaucoma is now considered a disease of the optic nerve that causes a loss of vision, usually in both eyes. This loss often begins with a subtle decrease in peripheral vision. If the glaucoma is not diagnosed and treated, it may progress to loss of central vision and blindness. It is the leading cause of blindness in African-Americans.

An optometrist is an eye care professional who is licensed to provide primary eye care services including the diagnosis of glaucoma. An ophthalmologist is a Doctor of Medicine (M.D.) who specialized in eye and vision care. They are trained to provide the full spectrum of eye care from prescribing glasses to complex eye surgery.