

REVENUE: No revenue impact

FISCAL: Minimal fiscal impact, no statement issued

Action:	Do Pass as Amended and Be Printed Engrossed
Vote:	8 - 0 - 0
Yeas:	Barnhart, Berger, Freeman, Garrett, Holvey, Wingard, Hunt, Olson
Nays:	-
Exc.:	-
Prepared By:	Jim Stembridge, Administrator
Meeting Dates:	5/16, 5/25

WHAT THE MEASURE DOES: Requires health benefit insurers that cover prescription eye drops for glaucoma also cover one early refill of that prescription if the refill is requested within 30 days of the date the original or previous refill was dispensed, the prescription includes a specific number of refills, the refill requested does not exceed the number of refills prescribed, and the prescription has not been refilled more than once within the 30 days prior to the early refill request. Declares emergency, takes effect October 1, 2011.

ISSUES DISCUSSED:

- Cost of eye drops
- Difficulty getting eye drops in the eye and other ways patient may run out of eye drops
- Amendment limiting measure to glaucoma
- Critical role of eye drops in treating glaucoma

EFFECT OF COMMITTEE AMENDMENT: Limits provisions to one early refill of eye drops for the treatment of glaucoma. Limits refills to two within any 30-day period.

BACKGROUND: According to the Glaucoma Research Foundation, “in the last few years, many glaucoma patients who use eye drop medications have been faced with more stringent restrictions on their prescriptions. Insurance companies now impose limits on quantities of eye drops and refill intervals. However, many patients have trouble putting in exactly one drop, precisely onto the eye. It is natural to have some drops miss the eye or to have two drops come out at once. This unavoidable waste of drops is one reason that some patients run out of their drops too soon.”

House Bill 3649-A does not mandate coverage of prescription eye drops, but requires that if prescription eye drops are covered, so must one early refill of the prescription be covered, if the early refill request meets the measure’s criteria that the refill be requested within 30 days of the most recent dispensing of the prescription or refill, there are sufficient refills left on the original prescription, and no more than two refills have been requested within any 30-day period.