



MEMORANDUM

To: Rep. Sara Gelsler, Chair of the House Education Committee
Rep. Jeff Reardon, Vice-Chair of the House Education Committee
Rep. Sherrie Sprenger, Vice-Chair of the House Education Committee
Members of the Committee

From: Bryan Boehringer, OMA Government Relations
Courtnei Dresser, OMA Government Relations

Date: March 27, 2013

Re: Support for HB 3000

The Oregon Medical Association is pleased to support HB 3000, a bill that supports vision screening for children seven years or younger who are entering school for the first time. Vision screening is a test that is used to identify vision problems before they impact student achievement and can be conducted by physicians, other qualified health care providers, school nurses or trained employees. Kids who are healthy learn better, especially when they have healthy eyes that can see their teacher and the board.

Vision screenings help identify potential problems that can be diagnosed and treated through a follow-up examination. Vision screenings are used to identify nearsightedness, farsightedness, astigmatism as well as amblyopia (“lazy eye”) and other conditions. Identifying these and other eye conditions via screening can prevent the progression of the disease and ensure that the child’s eyes are treated, so that the student does not face any barriers or disadvantages in their learning.

School-based screenings or proof of a vision screening are an opportunity not only to check the student’s eye health but also educate parents about how eye health impacts the students overall health. The American Academy of Ophthalmology and the American Academy of Pediatrics suggest that a child should be tested regularly, including annually after the age of 5 years.

We encourage the committee to support HB 3000 and give all Oregon students the advantage of starting their academic career with healthy eyes.

Thank you for your consideration of this important screening for Oregon’s students.

The Oregon Medical Association is an organization of over 8,100 physicians, physician assistants, and medical students organized to serve and support physicians in their efforts to improve the health of Oregonians. Additional information can be found at www.theOMA.org.