

WHAT'S WRONG WITH HOUSE BILL 3530?

In its current form it hurts consumers, employers and unions.

1. **HB 3530 would prohibit optometrists and insurers from negotiating discounts for materials and services that are not covered by the insurance policy (like a second pair of glasses or prescription sunglasses). Section 2 (2)(a).** Most Oregonians have vision care insurance, and most policies include these discount provisions. Literally thousands of Oregon consumers would lose this benefit in HB 3530 becomes law in its present form.

Optometrists argue that they are required to agree to these discounts as a condition of joining an insurance company's approved provider panel. **Proposed Compromise: Allow optometrists to "opt in" to an insurance company's discount program, giving the optometrists the choice about whether to participate in providing consumers with this benefit.**

2. **HB 3530 would prohibit insurers from "directly or indirectly" influencing an optometrist's choice of materials or optical labs. Section 2 (2)(d).** Many insurers have negotiated special volume discounts with material suppliers or optical labs, and some insurers are vertically integrated, with their own material manufacturers or labs.

Optometrists argue that they should be allowed to choose whatever material supplier or optical lab they prefer, not necessarily the supplier or lab that best serves the consumer. Loss of the volume discounts will increase prices for consumers, employers and unions that purchase vision care insurance policies. **Proposed Compromise: Allow optometrists to choose whatever material suppliers or labs they prefer to use, but give consumers the option to choose the lab that best serves them. If the optometrist's choice of suppliers and labs are credentialed (via ISO certification, etc.) using the same quality criteria used for the insurance company's current suppliers and labs, the optometrists chosen supplier or lab would be reimbursed at the same level as the insurance company's current suppliers and labs.**

Please don't support HB 3530 until these needed changes are made. Protect consumers, and employers and unions that purchase vision care coverage for their workers.

From the Desk of
Senator Ted Ferrioli