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SPECIALIZING IN
Cataract Surgery and
Laser Vision Correction

Rep. Rachel Prusak
Chair, House Health Care Committee
Oregon House of Representatives
900 Court St. NE, H-489
Salem, Oregon 97301

February 10, 2021

Dear Chair Prusak and Members of the House Health Care Committee:

The purpose of this letter is to express support for House Bill 2541. I am an ophthalmologist licensed in Oregon. And like my father, Dr. Robert Ford, I practice with a group of MDs and ODs at Pacific Cataract and Laser Institute. Two of our facilities are located in Oregon.

Optometrists are primary care experts serving patients on the front lines for their eye and vision care services. For more than three decades, ophthalmologists within our practices have had the privilege of working alongside qualified optometrists, caring for hundreds of thousands of patients upon referral throughout Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. We have also worked with these critical members of the vision care team to assist in the care of acute and chronic eye diseases. Like Dr. Robert Ford, I have personally had the opportunity to observe their clinical skills on many occasions. Because of these experiences, I can accurately attest to the competence and precision optometrists employ when approaching complex patient-related issues.

As health care practitioners, I believe our overall benefit to society is maximized when all providers can practice to the fullest extent of their training and competency. I am in favor of a law allowing optometrists the ability to practice to the highest level of their education, including advanced procedures outlined in HB 2541. The proposed Optometry Scope of Practice bill is careful and reasoned.

By empowering optometrists in their role as primary vision and eye care experts, this bill will allow ophthalmologists to focus their skills on secondary and tertiary eye care. This is critical as the needs of our aging population are projected to outpace the current supply of ophthalmologists.

Thank you for your consideration. Feel free to contact me with any questions.

Best regards,

Marshall Ford, MD

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