

Rep. Rachel Prusak, Chair
Rep. Cedric Hayden, Vice-Chair
Rep. Andrea Salinas, Vice-Chair
Members of the House Health Care Committee

Chair Prusak, Vice Chairs Salinas and Hayden, and members of the House Healthcare Committee,

My name is Lacey Echaliier, MD. I am a practicing ophthalmologist in Southern Oregon and am a fellowship trained Oculofacial Plastic and Reconstructive surgery specialist. I am writing to express my deep concerns about HB 2541.

Please vote NO on HB 2541.

I work closely with my optometry colleagues and am close friends with many of them. They have training in prescribing glasses and eye examinations which make them an excellent resource for general eye care. I respect and enjoy our collaboration. Our roles in patient care are both valuable, but very different.

HB 2541 would allow optometrists – non-medical doctors without surgical training-- to perform ophthalmic surgery including eyelid surgeries, refractive surgeries, eye and periocular injections, intraocular lasers, and corneal puncture among other things. This is not a limited bill; the language therein would allow optometrists to potentially perform hundreds of different types of eye or eyelid surgeries. As a surgeon, I know that those describing “simple or non-invasive” surgery whether it is performed by a scalpel or a laser, and especially so in the eye, do not fully appreciate the complexity of these surgeries. This is by no means a small extension of their existent scope of practice, ***this represents a radical departure from the current standard of medical surgical care enjoyed by the citizens of Oregon.***

Please vote NO on HB 2541.

Surgical training isn't like cooking. It is not like following a recipe or watching a video. If something goes wrong, you can't just start over. During surgical training the surgeon learns judgement and clinical decision making. A surgeon must operate for *years* under the supervision of an experienced surgeon, which is something that cannot be replaced by a weekend seminar or anything less than comprehensive surgical training. A surgeon knows when to operate, and which patients should not be operated on. This takes time and supervised training. I personally have completed 10 years of medical and surgical supervised training to treat autoimmune conditions, infections, trauma and cancers of the eye and periocular tissues. Isn't that what you would want for your eyes or those of a family member?

Please vote NO on HB 2541. Patients deserve to have safe, high quality, equal standards of care. Join California, Idaho, and Minnesota and the many other states who have repeatedly voted NO against optometry scope expansion.

Thank you for considering my position in advocating for patient safety. If I can provide you with any further information or serve as a resource on other health care issues about which you have questions, I am at your service.

Respectfully,

E. Lacey Echaliier, MD