

February 18, 2021

Oregon House of Representatives
House Health Care Committee
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear House Health Care Committee:

I am writing on behalf of myself, a current Optometry student, as well as those Oregon doctors of Optometry supporting HB2541.

What is most important for you to know is that the procedures referenced by HB2541 are part of the normal curriculum for all future optometric physicians. This includes lectures on post-operative care, complication recognition and hands-on training with instruments. We follow the same regimen with all optometric procedures, yet until Oregon statutes are modernized, doctors of optometry will not be able to perform YAG and SLT procedures in clinics. When considering where to practice post-graduation, this is definitely a deterrent. There are already five other states that allow optometrists to perform these procedures.

Allowing optometrists to perform these procedures allows patients living in rural areas with little access to transportation the chance at health care that they would not get otherwise. Much of Oregon is quite rural and traveling a far distance for healthcare is not always feasible especially in the elderly population. Even if they can travel, patients may have to wait an extended period for procedures that are time sensitive. Optometrists have the knowledge to implement these procedures into their practice, so their patients can have better access to eyecare.

When we graduate from school as doctors of optometry, we take an oath. A portion of the Optometric Oath that I find very applicable for this bill states: *"I WILL practice the art and science of optometry faithfully and conscientiously, and to the fullest scope of my competence."*

While I am studying for my tests, national board exams and proficiencies, what encourages me most is knowing that when I graduate, I will be able to serve patients with the best care I can offer with the training and education needed to perform these procedures.

House Health Care Committee, please vote YES on HB 2541. Allow us, the future doctors of optometry, to practice at the highest level of our education.

Sincerely,

Lu'Aie Dia

Pacific '24 | Doctor of Optometry Candidate

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lu'Aie Dia". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a large initial "L" and a distinct "Aie" and "Dia".