



NORTHEASTERN STATE UNIVERSITY

OKLAHOMA

COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY

To: House of Representatives Health and Human Services Committee
From: Cori Dorrell
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RE: HB 2223

Chairperson Carpenter and Members of the House Health and Human Services Committee, thank you for the opportunity to share my testimony with you today. My name is Cori Dorrell and I am currently a fourth year optometry student at Northeastern State University Oklahoma College of Optometry. I am originally from Highland, KS. As someone dedicated to improving eye care for my patients, I strongly urge you to support HB 2223, which seeks to modernize the scope of practice for optometric physicians in our state.

By passing HB 2223, you will ensure patients receive the eye care they need and eliminate unacceptable delays in treatment that are occurring in our state and will only worsen in time due to the disparity between the aging population and the limited number of ophthalmologists. In its current state, Kansas law imposes unnecessary limitations that force patients to seek treatment elsewhere—with longer wait times, and in locations that may be difficult to reach or may include crossing state lines. Optometrists are trained to perform in-office procedures in numerous other states and have proven to have excellent safety and efficacy outcomes even when compared to procedures performed by ophthalmologists.

As I'm a few months away from graduating and starting my career, I must weigh the choice of returning to Kansas or settling in a neighboring state where I can practice to the highest level of my training. The treatments I have been offering first-line in Oklahoma will be stripped away if I choose to practice in Kansas. I joined the profession to help people and save patients' sight. If I have to disappoint my patients by practicing in a state where their eyecare is restricted, I will not be fulfilled in my profession. That being said, I do not plan on returning to Kansas long-term if optometry scope is not modernized. Other students from Kansas are in agreeance with this statement and I am coming forward in this testimony to represent their voices as well as my own.

By passing HB 2223, you will increase optometry recruitment success and ensure that your constituents receive timely, high-quality treatment from the providers they already know and trust. I urge you to support this bill and help to close the access to care gap for all Kansans. Thank you for your time and consideration and thank you for the continuous work you do for the state of Kansas.

Sincerely,

Cori Dorrell