

May 1, 2024

The Honorable John Marty  
Chair, Finance Committee  
Minnesota Senate  
3235 Minnesota Senate Bldg.  
St. Paul, MN 55155



Dear Chair Marty:

On behalf of tens of thousands of Minnesotans who require additional eye health care from optometrists, the Minnesota Optometric Association (MOA) appreciates the support of so many legislators who have been working to find consensus with regard to the optometry scope modernization proposal; Sen. Maye Quade's SF659.

In reviewing SF4570, the MOA is pleased with Chair Wiklund's inclusion of the proposed medications language which is part of SF659. This gives Optometrists the ability to prescribe oral steroids up to 14 days, antivirals beyond 10 days at a time and oral carbonic anhydrase inhibitors (CAIs) for more than 7 days.

However, MOA is disappointed that proposed language outlined in SF659 regarding injections is not included in SF4570. Already, the optometry association has agreed to a number of legislative compromises: not allowing the use of lasers for surgery and intravitreal injections and agreeing to time limited medication renewals.

MOA encourages inclusion of the proposed injections language or even another option of proposed language we explored with Sen. Maye Quade and Sen. Mann. Having the ability to conduct these medical procedures in a Minnesota optometry clinic is critical to improving patient access to eye care.

Without this legislative authorization on injections, our neighboring states will continue to have more advanced scopes of practice compared to Minnesota. This will prolong patients' need to continue their travels to bordering states for better eye health care and/or they will have delayed wait periods before they can be seen by other medical professionals.

MOA remains hopeful and willing to continue ongoing discussions on this topic of injections as the legislative session progresses. The goal is to ensure proper eye care for our patients in Minnesota that can be better aligned with national optometry training and qualifications.

Thank you for your consideration and please reach out with questions or concerns.

Regards,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Stacy Hinkemeyer". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping tail.

Stacy Hinkemeyer, O.D.  
President  
Minnesota Optometric Association

Cc: Senator Melissa Wiklund  
Senator Erin Maye Quade  
Members of the Senate Finance Committee  
Rep. Robert Bierman

3800 American Boulevard West, Suite 1500 ♦ Bloomington, MN 55431  
Minnesota.aoa.org ♦ (952) 841-1122 ♦ (800) 678-8232 ♦ Fax (952) 921-5882