

April 1, 2024

The Honorable Melissa Wiklund
Chair, Health and Human Services Committee
Minnesota Senate
2107 Minnesota Senate Bldg.
St. Paul, MN 55155



Dear Chair Wiklund:

On behalf of the tens of thousands of Minnesotans who require additional eye health care from optometrists, the Minnesota Optometric Association (MOA) wants to say thank you. MOA appreciates you and your staff for the time and work leading up to and during the legislative session, attempting to find consensus with regard to the optometry scope modernization proposal.

In reviewing the A6 Delete-Everything (DE) Amendment to SF4570, the MOA is pleased to see inclusion of the proposed medications language which was part of Sen. Maye Quade's 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 the proposed language outlined in SF659 regarding injections is not included in the A6 DE Amendment. 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 updated 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 black ink, appearing to read "Stacy Hinkemeyer".

Stacy Hinkemeyer, O.D.
President
Minnesota Optometric Association

Cc: Senator Erin Maye Quade
Members of the Senate Health and Human Services Committee
Rep. Robert Bierman