

Statement of Richard Fichman, M.D.  
Public Health Committee  
HB 7159  
March 5, 3007

Members of the Committee:

My name is Dr. Richard Fichman. I am a licensed physician and Board Certified Ophthalmologist in the State of Connecticut.

I have practiced Ophthalmology for over 25 years. I have trained many Optometrists during that time and will tell you that they are a key part of my current practice. I was one of two Ophthalmologists who participated in lectures and training sessions for them once the 1996 changes took effect.

I supported the law then. But now we have ten years of experience with Optometrists' treating Glaucoma. I have seen nothing that would lead me to question their capabilities or qualifications in this area.

As I understand it, this legislation will allow Optometrists to treat secondary Glaucoma and administer oral agents. I believe those are a prudent and reasonable expansion of their authority. There are changes in the area of patient referrals. I also believe those are prudent and reasonable changes.

If there were some expansions of authority that troubled me, I would tell you. I see nothing like that in this legislation.

I have always viewed Optometrists as eye-care professionals, colleagues and a key part of the medical team. My belief is it is important to let medical professions practice to their maximum abilities and capabilities. I believe this bill does that. I hope you will enact it into law.

Thank you for the opportunity to present today. I would be happy to answer any questions you may have.