

**Public Health Committee  
Public Hearing February 6, 2009  
In support of Senate Bill 781**

Senator Harris, Representative Ritter and members of the Public Health Committee, I am Dr. Jerry Hardison, practicing optometrist in Hartford, Connecticut. I am submitting testimony in support of Senate Bill 781, An Act Concerning Therapeutic Contact Lenses. This bill was before your committee last year and received unanimous support from the committee and overwhelming support from the House. Unfortunately it was held up in the Senate.

Please do not be led to believe that this bill is an expansion of Optometric scope of practice. We are allowed by law to both prescribe contact lenses and therapeutic pharmaceuticals. The marriage of these two products simply represents a vehicle to provide a more consistent supply of drug therapy to those individuals that would benefit from such a delivery system. Examples include: patients that need frequent dosing, patients that have extreme difficulty administering their own drops and patients that are viewed as non compliant.

A small section of our practice act seems to preclude us from providing this device, as we are not allowed to dispense and charge for a drug. We are simply asking for an amendment that would correct this to allow our patients access to this product through our offices. Otherwise, if not changed, when this product becomes available and we have a patient that would benefit from this type of delivery system, we will only be able to write a prescription for the device. The patient would then be required to visit a medical eye specialist at additional expense and time to obtain the device.

I feel this request is certainly in line with regional and national effort to:

1. Embrace effective and efficient methods of care and,
2. Reduce barriers to care and improve access.

Thank you for your time and your willingness to review this request. Your support is most appreciated.

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