



Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians

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Written Testimony of the Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians
On Thursday February 11, 2010
To the Appropriations Committee
Regarding the Elimination of Optometric Services for Adults Qualifying for
Medical Assistance

The Connecticut Society of Eye Physicians, an organization that represents approximately 90% of the ophthalmologists practicing in Connecticut, is concerned that the elimination of optometric services for adults qualifying for state aid (SAGA) will not be in the best interest of Connecticut citizens. We understand and can appreciate the pressures the legislature is facing with the current deficit, and realize that there may be a need to limit some services, but the total denial of all optometric services will likely create challenges for it's neediest patients, and may actually add considerable cost to the state's healthcare budget.

CSEP believes that a strong healthcare delivery system includes a network of optometrists and ophthalmologists, working within their scopes of practice. This system has traditionally proved to be the best model for both quality of care and accessibility, and what we believe Connecticut needs to effectively care for its citizens. Beyond the quality and access impact of this action, we wonder whether the \$4.6 million estimated savings would be realized, as many of these patients will likely end up in our already over-crowded emergency rooms for simple ophthalmic problems that would best be treated in our respective offices, thus resulting in an unanticipated increase in cost to the state.

In closing, CSEP would like to work with you on this important issue to ensure quality, access, affordability and efficiency in the delivery of eyecare. We offer our help in finding a solution which is fair and respects the needs of all its citizens. Thank you for your time and consideration.