



Connecticut Association of Optometrists

35 Cold Spring Road, Suite 211
Rocky Hill, CT 06067
(860) 529-1900 www.cteyes.org

Statement of the Connecticut Association of Optometrists
before the
Public Health Committee
SB 428
March 12, 2010

Sen. Harris, Rep. Ritter and members of the committee:

I am Dr. Brian Lynch and represent the Connecticut Association of Optometrists (CAO) here today on Senate Bill 428. By way of background, I have practiced optometry in Branford for more than two decades and currently serve as legislative chair for the association.

I want to offer brief testimony on SB 428, *An Act Concerning Revisions to the Public Health Related Statutes*.

CAO strongly supports Section 55 of the bill. This provision would add Optometrists to the list of providers who are authorized to contract with and treat patients enrolled in networks established by a hospital foundation. As you know, the foundation law was passed last year (PA 09-212). That law authorized physicians, podiatrists and chiropractors to participate and treat patients. We would like to have this option also, but our specific chapter of the statutes—380—needs to be referenced in the law. Many times legislation is drafted that does not make the distinction between Medical Doctors who provide care (Ophthalmologists) and Optometric Doctors (Optometrists). Section 55 makes this needed distinction and thus includes Optometrists as authorized providers.

The Connecticut Association of Optometrists believes that the medical foundation structure can lead to increased access to the healthcare system for the people of Connecticut. We would like to have the opportunity to participate in this.

Finally, I would note that Section 18 adds to the list of practitioners who authorized to write written orders and medical regimen to a registered nurse. The professions added include Optometry—we support this change.

Thank you.