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*No matter who you are,  
or where you practice,  
we represent you!*

State of Connecticut  
Public Health Committee  
Room 3000, Legislative Office Building  
Capitol Avenue  
Hartford, Connecticut 06106

March 1, 2011

RE: Committee Bill № 537

AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRACTICE OF OPTICIANRY IN THE STATE

To: Senator Gerratana  
Representative Ritter  
Members of the Public Health Committee,

The Connecticut Opticians Association, Inc. represents some 600 opticians practicing in the State of Connecticut.

It is the opinion of the Association that to conduct a feasibility study as proposed by this bill, to be redundant, as well as a costly, time consuming expense to the State. Currently, the services recommended by this proposal are being legally provided by opticians.

The intention of this proposal is to "study the feasibility of allowing licensed opticians to provide optical services beyond the confines of a registered optical establishment, office or store. Such study shall minimally examine the feasibility of allowing licensed opticians to provide in-home services for the benefit of persons who are confronted with transportation barriers when accessing health care services."

There is nothing within the optician statutes or Department of Public Health Regulations which prohibit opticians from providing such in-home services.

**C.G.S. Chapter 381, § 20-150. Where Optical Goods May Be Sold** demands that no glasses... may be sold at retail except under the supervision of a licensed optician and in a registered optical establishment.... an optical establishment...is defined as meaning the owner of which has had issued to him an optical selling permit (in partial part). Nothing prohibits an optician from providing in-home services providing that the sale for such goods and services are recorded at an establishment which had issued to it such an optical selling permit. An optician may provide services as a representative of a duly registered optical establishment at the premises of any person who is confronted with transportation barriers. The sale for those services are documented and maintained at the location of the optical establishment

**Since at least 1996, the Department of Public Health has annually provided an Optical Selling Permit to an organization which provides in-home services to persons who would otherwise be unable to obtain optical health care services.** (HealthDrive Eye Care Group, Permit # 1525)

In addition, the State of Connecticut Board of Examiners for Opticians has addressed the feasibility of a mobile optical establishment.

In a letter dated February 18, 1994, the Board of Examiners for Opticians, responded to an

inquiry from an optician seeking to obtain an Optical Selling Permit for a mobile optical establishment.

Referencing the above statute, the Board wrote,

It was the opinion of the Board that such operations are allowed by the statutes provided that such a mobile office had a stationary address. A permanent residence or business address listed on the vehicle registration would be sufficient. It is also the opinion of the Board that the primary use of the vehicle must be for optical purposes and satisfy the statutory requirements necessary to obtain an optical selling permit.

Therefore, a mobile optical shop may have issued to it an optical selling permit under the direct supervision of a licensed optician. All existing statutes and regulations pertaining to the optical selling permit would prevail.

For these reasons, The Connecticut Opticians Association respectfully requests that you **do not** approve SB 00537.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Rene R. Rivard", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Rene R. Rivard, LO, ABOM, FCLSA(H)  
Executive Director