



**West End Eye Care**  
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**Public Hearing Testimony**  
**Public Health Committee**  
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Good afternoon Sen. Gerratana, Rep. Ritter, members of the committee. I am Dr. Jerry Hardison, practicing optometrist here in Hartford for the past 36 years and would like to voice my objection to HB 5625, An Act Concerning the Definition of Surgery. The wording of the Act defining surgery may have some merit as a talking point. However, as a definition inserted into the physician act, chapter 370, with total disregard to the health professions that may be impacted by such an act is to say the least an injustice. It is a disservice to those professions, the citizens of this state that are served by those professions and an insult to this legislative body that deemed it proper to propose the laws that govern those professions.

As you are all aware, optometry is a legislated profession. We have worked tirelessly to advance our profession. We have presented the facts, demanded and secured the education to support the facts and developed a practice act that has served our profession and our patients well. Within our scope of practice we are able to provide pharmaceutical care for our patients as well as some limited surgical procedures, as defined by insurance coding. Those procedures include the removal of foreign bodies and the treatment of the affected site as well as multiple procedures associated with proper tear production and drainage. We even participate in the post-operative co-management of surgical procedures including cataract and refractive surgery. As HB 5625 is defined, these services would be prohibited.

While one might argue that this proposed act could not possibly affect another profession's practice act, I am not convinced. Section 20-9 of the physician act, has a list of professions that are exempt from the provisions of Chapter 370. I am sorry to say, Optometry is not in that list.

I would urge you to reject HB 5625. There are too many unanswered questions. Why is it necessary? What truly is the motive behind this act? AND If organized medicine in this state is truly committed to a healthy society and accessible health care why would they not be willing to discuss the impact that this legislation would have on certain providers and the patients they serve.

Thank you for your time.