



American Optometric
Association

Alaska Optometric Association

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February 26, 2013

The Honorable Kurt Olson
Chair, House Labor and Commerce Committee
Alaska State Legislature
Juneau Alaska, 99801

Re: HB 125

Dear Mr. Olson:

The Alaska Optometric Association would like to express support for HB 125 to prohibit a health insurer from preventing refill of necessary eye medications. Currently, most insurers will deny a pharmacy claim if the insurer believes there should have been enough drops in the previous bottle to treat the patient according to the doctor's directions.

Even in an average patient, the ability to get every drop in a bottle into the eye and not onto the cheek, eyelid, or elsewhere does not exist. Additionally, there is a disproportionate need for eye pharmaceuticals in the geriatric population. With reduced dexterity in some individuals of advanced age comes reduced effectiveness in accurate drop instillation. Eye drops, gels, and ointments are not able to be metered exactly as pills and capsules can be. While it is safe to say that if a patient is prescribed 90 pills that 90 pills can be used with nearly absolute accuracy, there are many more variables to an eye medication with 90 drops in a bottle. As such, restrictions on early refill by insurers are unfair to the patients of Alaska.

Sincerely,

Dr. David Karpik, OD
President, Alaska Optometric Association