

## **Jody Simpson**

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**From:** Erik Christianson <erik@kpunet.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 01, 2017 8:28 AM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Tom Begich  
**Cc:** 'Erik Christianson'; alaskaoptometricassociation@gmail.com  
**Subject:** SB 36

Senators,

I am an optometric physician who has practiced in Ketchikan since 1990. I have practiced in Alaska since my graduation from optometry school in 1986. Prior to coming to K-town I spent 3 years in Barrow serving the residents of the North Slope. I have committed my professional career to preserving and enhancing the eye and visual health of rural Alaska. In the time I have been in Alaska I have seen optometry advance as a profession. I have seen us become the "family eye doctor". I am a trusted member of the health care team. Daily I work with the gamut of local health care providers as the "go to" eye expert in our community. Daily I refer to and work with ophthalmologists and other specialty providers from Alaska and the northwest to maximize outcomes for our patients through cooperative management of eye and related health conditions. Much of this advancement came because of legislation that modernized state law to allow doctors of optometry to expand their practice as knowledge, training, and technology advanced. SB 36 is the next logical step in the evolution of modern optometric practice. It is particularly applicable in our rural state where the doctor of optometry is the eye expert. I am asking your support of SB 36. SB 36 does not authorize doctors of optometry to do any procedures--it only gives the state board authority to regulate the profession for the safety of the public. The state board cannot authorize optometrists to do anything beyond their scope of education and training, and this is clearly stated in SB 36. SB 36 allows the State Board to regulate optometry just as other prescribing professions...without having to always return for legislation when new technology develops. Costs are reduced when local eye care providers are able to practice at a level commensurate with their experience and training. This will help reduce the number of trips a rural patient must make to see specialists. Additionally, new doctors of optometry are looking for places where they can practice the full spectrum of their skills. This modernization legislation will allow rural Alaska to be competitive in attracting quality young doctors. If you have questions regarding SB 36 feel free to contact me

Once again, thank you for your support of SB 36.

Erik D. Christianson, O.D.

Ketchikan Eye Care Center

351 Carlanna Lake Rd

Ketchikan, Alaska 99901

Main: 907 225-2020

Office: 907 228-6379; Cell: 907 617-0936

**Jody Simpson**

*Yes*

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**From:** Jessica Giesey <jlgiesey@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 7:02 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** SB 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Senator Wilson,

I am writing in support of SB 36. As a practicing optometrist in Anchorage I believe that myself and my colleagues should be able to practice the full scope of our training and education and have the ability to regulate our own board just as many other medical professions do. Thank you for your time and consideration of SB 36 and have a wonderful day.

Sincerely,

Jessica Giesey, O.D.

Sent from my iPhone

**Jody Simpson**

yes

**From:** Rob Fleckenstein <rob@ervc.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 9:09 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** Please support Senate Bill 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

My name is Robert Fleckenstein and I am an Optometrist that practices in Eagle River. I am writing you a short message to ask your support for SB 36. This bill helps to modernize and update the Alaska Optometry Statute and gives the Optometry Board the authority to regulate the practice of Optometry the same as other prescribing professions like dentistry, medicine and nursing. Your support for this bill would be greatly appreciated.

**ROBERT J. FLECKENSTEIN, O.D.**

*Signature*

**Eagle River Vision Clinic**

**16331 Heritage Pl. #104**

**EAGLE RIVER, AK, 99577**

**T: 907-694-2511**

**F: 907-694-3900**

[www.ervc.com](http://www.ervc.com)

**Jody Simpson**

yes  
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**From:** Denise Thanepohn <dlthanepohn@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 9:40 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** Senate bill 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Please support Senate bill 36 which allows the optometry board to regulate optometric practice just like MDs, dentists and nurses.

Our Wasilla office is in your district and we would appreciate your support.

Thank you.

Dr Denise Thanepohn  
Alaska Eye Care

Sent from my iPad

**Jody Simpson**

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*yes*

**From:** Kara Frank <karafrank88@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 9:46 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** Support SB 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Good evening,

Thank you for taking the time to read this email. I am writing on behalf of myself and my husband, Jacob Frank, OD. We own a practice in Palmer and would like to request your support in SB 36.

This bill is important to our profession as it allows optometrists to practice within the full scope of our training and education. It also permits the optometry board to regulate its own practice the same as other health professionals are currently allowed.

We believe this bill is beneficial to our family, our business, and our community, and we appreciate your consideration to this matter in advance.

Respectfully,

Kara Reynolds, OD & Jacob Frank, OD

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Kara Reynolds, OD  
Clinical Director

Lodestar Family Eye Care, PC  
625 South Cobb St | Suite 101  
Palmer | AK | 99645  
907.745.2273  
[www.lodestareye.com](http://www.lodestareye.com)

**Jody Simpson**

Yes

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**From:** gary <garykjomeod@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 10:53 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** Please support Senate Bill 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Senator Wilson:

I'm requesting your support for Senate Bill 36. This bill would allow the optometry board the authority to regulate its practice the same as the other prescribing health professions such as nursing, dentistry, and medicine. Optometrists should be able to practice within the full scope of our training and education. I am an optometrist who has been in practice in Anchorage since 1984. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Gary Kjome

**Jody Simpson**

Yes

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**From:** John Demske <johndemske@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 11:02 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** SB 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Hello Senator Wilson,

I am writing to inform you that I fully support SB 36, the bill that gives autonomy to the Alaskan Board of Optometry and allows doctors of optometry to practice as taught in their university training.

Thank you.

John Demske, O.D.

Soldotna

**Jody Simpson**

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yes

**From:** David Holdgrafer <djholdgrafer@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 01, 2017 7:58 AM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** Senate Bill 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Greetings Senator Wilson,

As practicing optometrist on Kodiak Island I would appreciate your support of Senate Bill 36. Thanks for your support of Optometry!

Best regards and wishes for the new year,

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David J Holdgrafer OD

Eyecare Excellence  
3450 E Rezanof Drive  
Kodiak, AK 99615  
t. 907-486-5504  
f. 907-486-6577

[djholdgrafer@gmail.com](mailto:djholdgrafer@gmail.com)

**Jody Simpson**

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JR

**From:** Roger Acquistapace <racquistapace@eyeclinicfbks.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 3:25 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** Senate Bill 36

Dear Senator Wilson,

I am writing to show my support for Senate Bill 36 introduced by Senator Giessel. If passed SB 36 would bring optometry in line with the other prescribing health professions such as dentistry, medicine and nursing in allowing its board the authority to regulate optometry practice within Alaska. SB 36 would allow practitioners to consistently deliver the highest quality eyecare to Alaskans without the arduous and expensive task of changing legislation each time new methods and technologies become available. As with all fields in healthcare, optometry is very dynamic and requires practitioners to stay abreast of new treatments and their delivery in order to ensure optimal health outcomes for those they serve.

I urge you to consider and support SB 36 for the benefit of all Alaskans.

Sincerely,

M. Roger Acquistapace, OD

Jody Simpson

yes

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**From:** FORREST MESSERSCHMIDT <docfor@gci.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 2:21 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Tom Begich  
**Subject:** Please support Senate Bill 36

Dear Senator,

SB 36 would allow Optometrists to practice up to their appropriate level of training and expertise. This bill would give the Optometry Board the ability to set scope of practice standards through regulation. **This is the same authority that other "limited license" professions such as Nursing and Dental Boards enjoy.** As a former board member I can attest to the great care and consideration the board takes in creating regulation with the primary goal of public protection. This streamlining and modernization of statute would in addition save a tremendous amount of time, energy and money expended by the Legislature in rehashing modernization of Optometry statutes in what seems to be a yearly process.

Thank you for your time,  
Forrest Messerschmidt, O.D.  
Juneau, Alaska

**Jody Simpson**

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4/11

**From:** victoria blower <victoria\_blower@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 2:13 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** SB 36 Optometry

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Senator Wilson,

Please support SB 36 which would allow the professional optometry board to have the authority to regulate it's practice as does all other prescribing health professions such as dentistry, medicine and nursing.

Optometrist should be able to practice within the full scope of our training and education.

Thank you, Victoria Blower

Sent from my iPad Vicky Blower

**Jody Simpson**

yes

**From:** sarah bixby-dubois <sarahbixbydubois@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 2:10 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** Support for Senate Bill 36.

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Please support SB 36.

This bill updates the Alaska Optometry statues, making it similar to the dental and nurse practitioner statues, whereas the board can determine the regulatory details of the practice of optometry. I feel very frustrated that our profession does not have the ability or authority to regulate its practice in the same manner as other prescribing health professions such as dentistry and nursing. Optometrists should be able to practice within the full scope of our training and education, especially in Alaska where residents are spread out in many different isolated locations with limited access to health care.

Sincerely,

Dr. Sarah Bixby-DuBois, Optometrist

Alaska Vision Center, Inc.

Juneau, AK 99801

[sarahbixbydubois@gmail.com](mailto:sarahbixbydubois@gmail.com)

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Sarah Bixby-DuBois | Optometrist | Alaska Vision Center, Inc. | 800 Glacier Ave Ste. B, Juneau, AK 99801  
Phone: 907.586.9864 | Fax: 907.463.2679 | [akvision@alaska.net](mailto:akvision@alaska.net) or [sarahbixbydubois@gmail.com](mailto:sarahbixbydubois@gmail.com) |

**Jody Simpson**

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*yes*

**From:** John Shank <shankj45@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 2:06 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** SB36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Senator Wilson,  
Please support SB36.  
Thank you,  
John T Shank

**Jody Simpson**

AK  
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**From:** Barbara Keys <drkeys@akwestvalleyvision.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 1:05 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** SB 36

Dear Senator Wilson,

I am writing to request that you support SB 36. I have had the privilege of practicing Optometry in Fairbanks for the past 22 years. Our scope of practice has changed to better take care of our patients in that time. SB 36 ensures the Optometry board has the authority to regulate its practice the same as the other prescribing health professions such as dentistry, medicine and nursing.

Optometrists should be able to practice within the full scope of our training and education.

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Barbara Keys, OD

A160

Jody Simpson

Yes

**From:** Benjamin Crawford <dr Crawford@accuratevisionclinic.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 12:50 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** Please Support Senate Bill 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Senator Wilson,

Please support SB 36. I am a born and raised Alaskan optometrist. I returned to Alaska after attending school in the L48 and I now own my own practice in Anchorage. Luckily for me, Alaska has always been a great place to be an optometrist. I'd like to keep it that way, so that is why I'm asking for your support on SB 36.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Benjamin Crawford, O.D.

Accurate Vision Clinic

*We've moved! Beginning January 30<sup>th</sup> our address will be;*

*3401 Minnesota Dr., Suite 200*

*Anchorage, AK 99503*

Office 907-272-9800 | Fax 907-277-1398 | Mobile 907-717-1038

[email](#) | [website](#) | [facebook](#) | [linkedin](#)

**Jody Simpson**

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*(Handwritten initials)*

**From:** Mike Mavencamp <drmavencamp@akwestvalleyvision.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 12:40 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** SB 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Senator Wilson,

I am writing this letter to show support for SB 36. Optometry in the state of Alaska has an excellent track record for caring for the people of Alaska; as such I believe the board of optometry should have the authority to regulate our practice just as dentistry, nursing and medicine self regulates their professions. This would allow Optometrist to practice within the full scope of our training and education which in turn would benefit the patients that we serve. Thank you for your time concerning this matter.

Sincerely,

Michael Mavencamp, O.D.

**Jody Simpson**

*yes*

**From:** Jill Matheson <vision@alaska.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 31, 2017 8:02 AM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** Senate Bill 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

**Categories:** In 2D

Dear Senator Wilson,

I would like to put forth my strong support for Senate Bill 36. This bill would allow the Board of Optometry to regulate Optometrists just as Dentists, Doctors and Nurse Practitioners regulate themselves. I testified for a similar bill in the past years and strongly support this bill as written. As a former Chair of the State Board of Examiners in Optometry, I understand the need to have as broad of language as possible in statute, so that the Board can more quickly and easily change regulations when advancements in our field happen. This Bill allows the Board to define Optometry in modern terms, and keep us Optometrists providing care for our patients at the highest level possible.

Please don't hesitate to contact me by email ([vision@alaska.net](mailto:vision@alaska.net)) or phone (907-723-6119) if you have any questions.  
Jill Matheson, OD

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Jill Geering Matheson, OD  
Alaska Vision Center, Inc.  
800 Glacier Ave.  
Juneau, AK 99801  
PH: 907-586-9864 FAX: 907-463-2679

**Jody Simpson**

ALS  
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**From:** David Karpik <davidkarpik.od@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 30, 2017 10:26 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** please support SB 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

**Categories:** In 2D

Senator Wilson,

I am writing to ask for your support for SB 36. This simple and clear statute would rewrite the patched-together legislation that is the current optometry law. Optometry has a long history as an independent profession that is conservative in decision making that always has the best interest of the patient in mind. The optometry board should have the authority to regulate its practice the same as the other independent prescribing health professions such as dentistry, medicine and nursing.

Optometrists should be able to practice within the full scope of our training and education. This optimizes access to quality and timely care for patients, and reduces costs, including the burdens of unnecessary travel often paid by state Medicaid funds.

Respectfully,  
David Karpik, OD  
Kenai Vision Center

**From:** Elizabeth Hunt <ehunt@lifetime-eyecare.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 01, 2017 1:47 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson; Sen. Natasha Von Imhof; Sen. Cathy Giessel; Sen. Peter Micciche; Sen. Tom Begich  
**Subject:** Senate Bill 36

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Dear Senators,

I wanted to touch base with you about Senate bill 36. Some would have you believe that Senate bill 36 would authorize an Optometrist to do surgery, and that the moment SB 36 is passed Optometrists will pick up the scalpel and begin performing all sorts of surgeries completely out of their scope of training. This is completely untrue, and had we as optometrists desired to become surgeons, we would have gone to medical school (and many of us very well could have).

Senate Bill 36 has nothing to do with granting privileges of surgery. **Senate bill 36 clarifies and simplifies the oversight of our profession and puts it in the hands of people who are most familiar with it. The purpose of the bill is to give optometrists equal rights to govern their profession, exactly like medical doctors, dentists and nurse practitioners govern their profession with the use of a board.** This means that our optometry board (which has members from both optometry as well as the general public)—instead of the legislature –would control our scope of care based on our training and what is in the interest of the public good. The board would never authorize Optometrists to perform procedures they were not well trained to perform, and **in fact the bill contains language specifically prohibiting Optometrists from performing the very surgeries the opposition is claiming it would authorize.** This is great, because, guess what? We do not want to become surgeons, and optometrists tend to be very conservative clinicians by nature which is reflected in our incredibly low malpractice premiums.

So why is the bill important? An easy example is the change of Vicodin from a schedule III to a schedule II drug by the FDA. Privileges at the time allowed optometrists to prescribe Vicodin in a very small supply over 4 days to patients with severe corneal abrasions for example. With the FDA change we had to actually put a bill through the legislature, which was very costly and cumbersome, simply to keep a privilege that we had already been granted and used responsibly.

Medical boards control the way the medical profession practices. Dentists and Nurse Practitioners have the same exact same privileges. All of these boards have done a tremendous job regulating the professions and protecting the public, and ours serves this same purpose. Our profession simply asks to be treated equally, and to be able to continue to provide innovative and quality care to rural Alaskans. Any innovations in care would be governed by our own board, a board that would never allow a non-surgeon to perform surgery. It would go against the very principle of the board's existence.

The sad part about the very expensive and very manipulative tactics used by the opposition is that it paints our profession in a negative light, and is spreading lies about what Senate bill 36 is all about. Anyone listening to their ads would say, "well of course I don't want an optometrist performing my cataract surgery, so I am telling my senator to vote no on SB 36 and I am going to speak out against it." If this were true, I would feel the same. But that is not at all what this bill would do, and the opposition amounts to unfounded scare tactics; we

are asking for fair treatment under the law, not asking for the scalpel. Thank you very much for your thoughtful consideration.

Best,

Elizabeth Hunt, OD

Optometrist practicing in Juneau, Alaska

**Jody Simpson**

*ye*

**From:** Jeffrey Mattson <Jeffrey.Mattson@pcli.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, February 01, 2017 1:07 PM  
**To:** Sen. David Wilson  
**Subject:** SB36 Support

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Hello Senator,

My name is Jeffrey Mattson, I am an optometrist who practices in Anchorage, AK and I am asking your support of SB36.

SB36 does not authorize optometrists to do any procedures--it only gives the state board authority to regulate the profession for the safety of the public.

The state board would never authorize optometrists to do anything beyond their scope of education and training, as is clearly stated in SB36.

On every legislation for over the past 40 years, organized ophthalmology has claimed "terrible harm by optometrists" yet history proves this has NEVER been true.

Once again, thank you for your support of SB36.

Jeffrey Mattson, O.D.