

## **Support Emails for SB 55 Optometry**

**Compiled 2-20-15**

Dear Senator Cathy Giessel,

Please support SB 55! SB 55 updates the Alaska Optometry statutes, allowing the board to determine the regulatory details of practice.

SB 55 places the details of the continuing education requirements back into regulation where they belong, as the Department indicated they desired many years ago.

SB 55 leaves the details of the current pharmaceutical prescribing authority up to the board, through regulation, as with the other prescribing professions. The bill does clearly prohibit injections into the vitreous body of the eye, which is done by specialty ophthalmologists.

SB 55 brings the definition of optometry into 2015. Optometrists are trained to perform far more advanced procedures than many years ago. The new definition clearly defines how optometrists are already practicing and allows the board the flexibility to assure protection of the public. And there is a section on limitations on practice which excludes any invasive surgery, and a section clearly defining all the excluded surgery reserved for ophthalmology, including laser PRK, even though many optometrists can perform this in a few other states, it is still prohibited in SB 55.

Sincerely,

Kathleen Rice, OD

Kenai, AK

Dear Senator Giessel,

My wife and I have practiced optometry in Fairbanks for the past fifteen years. We initially arrived in Alaska as an active duty family at Bassett Army hospital, but found that the kindness of the people that make up the community of Fairbanks encouraged us to make Alaska our home.

During our time serving the community of Fairbanks as optometrists we have always appreciated the Alaskan legislature's willingness to adjust the state's statutes to reflect the advances in technology available to our profession and the ever evolving scope of optometric practice. Optometrists provide the majority of primary eye care in our community and the increased scope of practice over the years has definitely improved our patients access to timely therapeutic intervention.

Thank you for supporting SB 55, as this bill would allow the Alaska Board of Optometry to regulate our continued education requirements and scope of medical prescribing to reflect the current advances in optometric education and technology. This bill would allow the board of optometry to insure proper protection of the public as is the case for many of the other board regulated professions in Alaska. We are blessed to practice in a state that has always recognized the advancements in optometric patient care.

Thank you,

Drs. Chad and Colleen Personett  
Fairbanks, AK

Dear Ms. Conway:

As an optometrist with 26 years experience (20 in Alaska), I strongly support DROPPING the injections course requirement. We optometrists DO NOT DO INJECTIONS. It is a hostile requirement introduced to HARM optometry.

D J Kosterman OD

Sen. Giessel:

As an optometrist with 26 years experience (20 in Alaska), I strongly support the repeal of the requirement for a seven hours injection course. It is an unnecessary burden, unrelated to the actual practice of optometry.

Daniel Kosterman, OD