

Senate Bill 55 Support E-mails

Hello Sen. Costello,

I know you are in the midst of a busy legislative session, but I'd like to urge you to support SB 55. This bill would allow the Optometrists to be regulated by the State Board. As it stands now, with any change in technology or medical advancement, the Optometrists have to have legislative approval to keep up with the times. In my opinion, this is a burden to the Optometrists, as well as to the State.

I respectfully ask that you please support SB-55 as you prepare for the Labor and Commerce Committee hearing, Thursday March 10th.

Warm Regards,

Brennan & Valerie Walsh
3925 W. 79th CT
ANC, AK 99502

Dear Senator Ellis,

I am writing to encourage your support of Senate Bill 55. This bill would improve patient access to care and help reduce costs. It does not allow for optometry to perform any procedures as clearly stated in SB55, but rather provides the State Board authority to regulate it's profession for the good and welfare of the patient, like the other prescribing professions. Optometrists are recognized at Physicians under Federal Medicare law, with a history of impeccable patient safety. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Ladd Nolin O.D.
Alaska Eye Care Centers

Senator Costello,

I am writing to ask for your support of SB 55, a bill that would modernize the statutes regarding the practice of optometry. An overwhelming majority of Americans choose optometrists to provide their eye care, with recent studies estimating that 85% of comprehensive eye examinations are provided by trusted optometrists. In Alaska, this number is likely even higher

than the national average due to the widespread geographic distribution of doctors of optometry within the state.

SB 55 does not authorize new procedures, it simply places the responsibilities regarding the day to day regulation of the profession with the state board of optometry rather than taking more of the precious time of you and your fellow lawmakers in utilizing the legislative process to update the practice of optometry. Modern teachings and research continuously change best practices. The best and most cost-effective care for Alaskans comes from prompt application of these best practices.

Thank you for your time, and please support SB 55.

Sincerely,

David Karpik, OD
Kenai Vision Center

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

Please support SB 55.

This bill updates the Alaska Optometry statutes in several areas, making it similar to the dental and nurse practitioner statutes, whereas the board determines the regulatory details of practice. This allows more flexibility as technology advances.

It places the details of the continuing education requirements back into regulation where they belong, as the Department indicated they desired many years ago. Current regulations already require 36 hours per license period, and the deleted hours shown are redundant and require unnecessary work for Occupational Licensing.

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

SB 55 re-writes the optometry definition which is currently over 40 years old. Optometrists are trained to perform far more advanced procedures than many years ago. The new definition clearly defines modern optometry, 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.

Thank you for your attention.....Dr. Jerimiah Myers "Doc"

Dear Senator Giessel,

I am writing to ask you to please support SB 55.

SB 55 updates the Alaska Optometry Statute in several key areas.

SB 55 addresses the will of the Department of Commerce, Community and Economic Development to put the continuing education requirements back into regulation--where they belong.

SB 55 will allow the optometric board to determine the regulatory details of practice similar to dental and nurse practitioners. This flexibility is important if we are to continue to bring quality, timely advances in eye care technology to our patients throughout Alaska.

SB 55 updates and clearly defines modern day optometry. In Alaska and around the country, today's optometrist, unlike generations ago, in addition to utilizing pharmaceuticals, employ the use of sophisticated lasers and imaging equipment to best diagnose, manage and treat ocular conditions ranging from glaucoma, corneal disease, to diseases of the retina.

SB 55 safeguards the public by requiring optometrists to be qualified for any procedures they perform.

SB 55 defines limitations of practice. Invasive surgery is expressly prohibited and "invasive" is clearly defined. Thank you for your support.

Sincerely,
Steven S. Dobson, O.D.
President, Alaska Optometric Association Past Chair, Alaska Board of Optometry

Please support SB 55.

This bill updates the Alaska Optometry statutes in several areas, making it similar to the dental and nurse practitioner statutes, whereas the board determines the regulatory details of practice. This allows more flexibility as technology advances.

It places the details of the continuing education requirements back into regulation where they belong, as the Department indicated they desired many years ago. Current regulations already require 36 hours per license period, and the deleted hours shown are redundant and require unnecessary work for Occupational Licensing. We do not need the additional seven hours of injectables training every four years. It is an added cost and requires travel outside of Alaska which results in less days in our clinics treating patients.

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

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CDR Sarah Stienbarger, OD, FAAO

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Thank you. Marilyn Holm, OD

Mrs. Conway,

Please support SB 55.

This bill updates the Alaska Optometry statutes in several areas, making it similar to the dental and nurse practitioner statutes, whereas the board determines the regulatory details of practice. This allows more flexibility as technology advances and in today's ever changing healthcare environment it is important to be able to adapt quickly.

It places the details of the continuing education requirements back into regulation where they belong, as the Department indicated they desired many years ago. Current regulations already require 36 hours per license period, and the deleted hours shown are redundant and require unnecessary work for Occupational Licensing. It has been my personal experience that working with the State Licensing Department is cumbersome at best. When I was first applying for my Alaska license in 2010, there was not even a person designated to handle Optometry licenses which caused unnecessary delay.

SB 55 re-writes the optometry definition which is currently over 40 years old. Optometrists are trained to perform far more advanced procedures than many years ago. The new definition clearly defines modern optometry, 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,

Benjamin Crawford, O.D. Accurate Vision Clinic

Dear Senator Giessel,

I am writing to you in support of SB 55 regarding the practice of Optometry. As a former chair of the State of Alaska Board of Examiners, I have spent a lot of time reviewing and working with both the Optometry statutes and regulations. SB 55 should be supported because it not only removes the required continuing education requirements from the statute and puts it back in regulation, but also because it redefines Optometry and defines invasive surgery.

I feel these changes would enable the board to react, via the regulatory process, to changes as technology advances. This is more consistent with other prescribing professions in the state. Having the definitions of Optometry and invasive surgery in statute provides safety to the public in that these definitions clearly define modern Optometry and limits invasive surgery. While the Board would be confined to these definitions and restrictions, I feel SB 55 still allows the Board enough room to update the regulations to coincide with advancements in the field of Optometry for the foreseeable future.

Thank you for your consideration of this bill.

Sincerely,

Jill Geering Matheson, OD

Dear Senator Giessel:

I am writing to ask for your support of SB 55.

SB 55 changes the Alaska Optometry statutes to allow the Alaska Board of Examiners in Optometry to determine the regulations regarding the practice of Optometry. This change is similar to the current statutes for dentistry and nurse practitioners in Alaska. SB 55 would allow the Alaska Board of Examiners in Optometry to make changes in the Optometry regulations when advances in training and technology occur within the profession.

SB 55 would also put the details of continuing education for Optometrists into

regulation. Currently continuing education requirements are in statute and some of those statutes were written decades ago. SB 55 would allow the Alaska Board of Examiners in Optometry to change the educational requirements as technology advances and keep the educational requirements for practitioners up to date with current training at Schools and Colleges of Optometry.

Additionally SB 55 would put the details of pharmaceutical prescribing in the authority of the Alaska Board of Examiners in Optometry. It would however limit pharmaceutical prescribing to conditions related to the eye and would prohibit injections into the vitreous cavity of the eye.

SB 55 also modernizes the definition of Optometry to be up to date with the training of Optometrists today. The current definition of Optometry was written over 40 years ago and does not reflect the training that Optometrists receive today. The new definition also prohibits invasive surgical procedures which Optometrists are not trained to perform.

I support SB 55 and humbly ask for your support of this legislation as well.

Sincerely,

Paul M. Barney, OD

Dear Senators Costello, Meyer, Stevens, Ellis and Giessel,

I am writing to support and clarify the primary purpose of SB 55. It is in line with AS 08.72.010 (Creation and Purpose of the [Optometry Examiners] Board) which is “to regulate and control the practice of optometry and to protect and promote the public health, welfare, and safety.” SB 55 furthers that purpose by helping Alaska’s Primary Eye Care Doctors, Optometrists, to continue providing high quality eye care to all communities across the state.

Optometrists are the primary providers of eye health care for most Alaskans and we do so all over the state. They greatly outnumber the very small number of ophthalmologists whose practices are mostly located in our two largest cities. Most importantly, our history of providing primary eye care is exceptional.

Critics of the bill are arguing against abuses that to date have been non-existent and disregard the safeguards in place through the Board, safeguards enhanced by this bill.

Optometrists are clearly well aware of the limits of our training and the record is clear that we have always readily and freely referred patients to ophthalmologists when appropriate as you would expect from professionals.

I encourage you to move SB55 on to a vote promptly.

Laura Kompkoff, O.D.

Katmai Eye and Vision Center

Dear Senator Giessel,

I have been an Optometrist in Alaska since 2008, and am the owner of Northern Lights Eye Care. I am writing in hopes that you will support SB 55.

SB 55 will allow the state board of Optometry to govern itself similar to other prescribing professions in the state, such as Dentists and Nurse Practitioners. This would allow the board to more easily adapt to changes in technology and advancements in the profession that would benefit the general public without having to wait for costly and time consuming legislation.

As Optometrists, we provide the vast majority of eye care throughout the state, and take pride in treating eye diseases and caring for Alaskans eyes. Attack ads against SB 55 claim that we are trying to do surgery "with knives and scalpels". This is just not true; as a profession we have an excellent track record of providing comprehensive eye care within our scope of training, and SB 55 will only help to ensure that we are able to continue to provide great care to Alaskans. I hope that you will support Optometry with your vote in support of SB 55.
Sincerely,

Adam Huff, O.D. Northern Lights Eye Care

Hello Senator,

I am writing to let you know that I am in favor of SB 55.

I have been practicing optometry since 1973. I moved to Bethel, Alaska in 1978 and opened my practice in Soldotna in 1983.

Passing this bill will not change anything that I do in my practice today. SB 55 only gives the state Board of Examiners in Optometry authority to regulate the profession in accordance with current education and training.

Please know that the disinformation campaign by some of the ophthalmologists is full of lies. Their radio ad about optometrists using scalpels is ludicrous. Although I have to be honest with

you – my personal doctor, an M.D., just gave me a scalpel last week, so I can shave the annoying callus on my foot.

I appreciate all the work you do for the Kenai Peninsula and I would appreciate your support of SB 55. Thanks for your time.

Sincerely,

John A. Demske, O.D.

I was born and raised in Wrangell, Alaska and have recently graduated from optometry school. I now practice in Anchorage and hope to continue providing quality eye care, especially to those living in small communities. I am asking your support of SB 55.

The State Board would NEVER authorize optometrists to do anything beyond their scope of education and training, as is clearly stated in SB 55.

Alaska citizens should have the best access to affordable eye care, and optometrists provide the vast majority of eye care throughout Alaska, including remote towns and villages.

When needed, optometrists work closely with ophthalmologists referring patients for specialty care and surgery, just as family doctors and nurse practitioners refer to specialists when needed.

Thank you for your time and your support of SB 55.

Ashley Kettler, O.D.

Dear Senator Giessel,

I'm sure you've heard about SB 55, since there are some outlandish claims about what this bill does.

Optometrists are not a bunch of knife wielding idiots hoping to get sued. This bill does not allow optometrist to do surgery.

For the past 40 years, ophthalmologists have been making wild claims about how changes in The Optometry law is going to cause Alaskans to go blind and other various dire consequences. It hasn't happened. As an independent measure of the danger we are causing, let's look at malpractice rates for optometrists: the average premium for optometrists is \$485 a year.

Hmmm, doesn't sound like we're a big threat. Maybe ophthalmologists out to look and see who's driving up there rates and quit worrying about a turf war.

Since optometrists are located in areas where ophthalmologists aren't, doesn't it make sense to have health care providers practicing at their highest level of competency instead of patients having to travel hundreds of miles to receive care? If it's outside of our training, or beyond what a particular practitioner is comfortable treating, the patient will be referred for to the appropriate doctor. That's what we do now!!! We really don't want to end up in a court room.

So Senator Giessel, I'm asking for your continued support of SB 55, and hope you might share these thoughts with your colleagues.

Dennis A Swarner
OD Kenai Vision Center

Dear Senator Cathy Giessel :

Thank you very sincerely for your public service. I especially appreciate any effort that may help provide our fellow Alaskans and the generations of Alaskans to come, a modern, efficient, safe and personal healthcare system.

Since arriving in Alaska in the early 1970's with my dad, an Air Force medical doctor (pathologist) and my mom, a teacher and business woman, I have seen many changes here in Alaska. At an early age while

attending high school in Girdwood, I decided to dedicate my life to serving others as a healthcare provider. I wanted to be part of that change. Most fortunately, I met the love of my life, now my wife, Dr. Rebecca Makar, in the early 1980s and she too had the same goals. We both spent our early years ski racing for UAA, attending premed classes at UAA & Pacific Lutheran University, training to become optometrists and then finally moving immediately back to serve Alaskans. For years we trained with & worked in the same practice with ophthalmologists (one is my wife's father). Today we work in our own practice in midtown Anchorage, which is open evenings & 6 days a week and we still coordinate care & work together with many types of medical professionals/providers over the phone and through referrals & consultations to provide a key role in a great and hopefully improving healthcare system. As the providers of eye care to the highest percentage of a population, optometrists see the most diverse set of eye diseases, so they often make themselves available to patients whenever they need us. Some travel to remote areas. It is expensive for patients to travel to cities to see specialists and I've seen it first hand for 20 years. Although it's been an arduous path and it still is, we intend to continue to bring the latest technology & medical care to Alaska.

With SB 55, the state board would be able regulate optometry as the other prescribing professions, which would facilitate bringing this new medical technology and better healthcare to our patients in Alaska. The board of optometry would NOT let optometrists practice beyond their scope of training and education and I have never met an optometrist that expressed an interest in practicing that way. They are a kind group of professionals set on making the world a better place. We care for hundreds of thousands of individuals that we see not just in our practice, but also when we are living our everyday lives at the grocery store, on the streets and hiking trails. These are our friends, family, neighbors, tourists, and remote Alaskan residents.

Please support of SB 55. We are committed to continue to work diligently to provide great care and make Alaskans proud of their healthcare system.

Very Sincerely

Anthony Makar OD

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 the 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 55 is the next logical step in the evolution of modern optometric practice. It is particularly applicable in our state where the doctor of optometry is the eye expert.

I am asking your support of SB55. SB55 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 SB55. SB 55 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 55 feel free to contact me

Once again, thank you for your support of SB55.

Erik D. Christianson, O.D.

As a born and raised Alaskan and the owner of my own private practice, I am asking for your support of SB55.

Alaska citizens should have the best access to affordable eye care, and Optometrists provide the vast majority of eye care throughout Alaska, including remote towns and villages such as Kodiak.

Costs are reduced when most eye care can be provided locally by family eye doctors instead of traveling to see expensive specialists.

When needed, Optometrists work closely with Ophthalmologists referring patients for specialty care and surgery, just as family doctors and nurse practitioners refer to specialists when needed.

Thank you very much for your support of SB55.

Andrea Eberle, O.D.

Dear Senator Mia Costello, Chair, Senate Labor and Commerce Committee;

My name is Nathan Frank, OD, and I am writing to ask for your support of SB 55, which will allow the state board of optometry to regulate the profession of optometry for the safety of all Alaskans.

There has been little mention of what an optometrist undergoes to earn their Doctorate of Optometry degree. I'd like to provide a brief synopsis of my background to help you understand my point of view. I attended four years of undergraduate education, followed by four years of optometry school, and finally completed an accredited residency affiliated with The Johns Hopkins Hospital in order to specialize in Ocular Disease. In addition to this formal education, I have lectured at numerous continuing education classes, attended hundreds of hours of

continuing education, and frequently spend my free time reading the newest and most up-to-date eye care research. Additionally, I continue to train internal medicine and family practice residents at my current practice, Ophthalmic Associates—where I work as the only optometrist alongside four ophthalmologists. As you can extrapolate from my professional experience, optometrists are physicians (as defined and accepted as under Federal Medicare law) and should possess the right to treat patients accordingly.

As a resident and practicing optometrist, I've worked directly with ophthalmology in a group setting at three different private practices spanning Maryland and Alaska. In this time, I've learned the patient benefits most when optometrists can practice to the fullest extent of their knowledge and training. Passing SB 55 will allow optometrists to maximize their skill set and provide the best care to patients. I would like to point out that SB 55 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. I am not writing because I wish to perform surgeries, I am writing to you simply to ask you to pass this bill to ensure I can practice within my realm of expertise. Just as a family practice physician would not perform open-heart surgery or an occupational therapist would not diagnose a congenital deformity, optometrists are not attempting to do anything beyond their scope of education and training, as is clearly stated in SB 55.

Passing SB 55 will immensely benefit the greater population of Alaska. Not only will the multidisciplinary nature of eye care continue to flourish, but also Alaska citizens will experience increased access to affordable eye care. Optometrists provide the vast majority of eye care throughout Alaska, including remote towns and villages. In addition to increased access to eye care, the population will experience reduced costs when most eye care can be provided locally by optometrists.

By allowing optometrists to effectively regulate their scope of practice by passing SB 55, you will improve patient eye care in Alaska. Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Nathan Frank, OD

Optometrist, Ophthalmic Associates

Hello,

I am a local optometrist who practices here in Anchorage and I am asking for your support for SB55.

Alaska citizens should have the best access to affordable eye care, and optometrists provide the vast majority of eye care throughout Alaska, including remote towns and villages. Restricting competition for no valid reason greatly raises the cost of care. Costs are reduced when most eye care can be provided locally by family eye doctors instead of traveling to see expensive specialists.

When needed, optometrists work closely with ophthalmologists referring patients for specialty care and surgery, just as family doctors and nurse practitioners refer to specialists when needed.

Thank you for your support of SB55. Jeffrey Mattson, O.D.

I urge you to support SB-55. This bill would allow Optometrists to be regulated by the State Board. Currently, with any change in technology or medical advancement, Optometrists have to have legislative approval to keep up with the times. This is a burden to Optometrists, their patients, as well as the State.

I respectfully ask that you please support SB-55 as you prepare for the Labor and Commerce Committee hearing, Thursday March 10th.

Sincerely,

Maria Crawford

Dear Senator Costello,

I am writing to you regarding SB 55. As a constituent in your district and as an optometrist practicing in Alaska, I would like you to know that SB 55 will help improve the quality of care I am able to provide to my patients by allowing our state board to determine the scope of our practice. As it stands now, when new classes of drugs or non-surgical treatments become part of the practice of optometry as taught in our schools, we have to go back to the legislature to get permission to use them put into state law. It is not efficient and it doesn't make sense when we have a state board of optometry that we can trust to do this. Over the last 40 years, the legislature has passed separate bills to allow us to use diagnostic drugs (eg. dilating drops), topical therapeutic drugs, and oral therapeutic drugs, among others. We as optometrists are not trying to gain the right to practice outside the scope of our training. We only want to make

it possible for us to continue practicing optometry to the full extent of our training in the future. This bill would make it possible for us to do so much more efficiently without having to go back to the legislature every time the practice of optometry advances.

I am asking for your support of SB 55. Please feel free to contact me if you would like to discuss it.

Sincerely,

Jim Falconer

Hello Senators,

I know you are in the midst of a busy legislative session, but I'd like to urge you to support SB-55. This bill would allow the Optometrists to be regulated by the State Board. As it stands now, with any change in technology or medical advancement, the Optometrists have to have legislative approval to keep up with the times. In my opinion, this is a burden to the Optometrists, as well as to the State.

I respectfully ask that you please support SB-55 as you prepare for the Labor and Commerce Committee hearing, Thursday March 10th.

Warm Regards, Vonda Roark-Martinez

Dear Senator Gardner,

I am a lifelong second generation Alaskan and second generation optometrist in Anchorage.

SB 55 allows the State Board to regulate optometry as the other prescribing professions, without having to return for legislation for new technology and delaying quality care for Alaskans.

As a new graduate, this bill would allow the board to recognize my education and training and allow me to provide the best care for my patients. As stated in SB 55, the board would never allow optometrists to provide care outside of their scope of education and training.

Thank you for your support of SB55. Lauren Hazelton OD

Dear Senators,

I am an optometrist and resident of Wasilla, Alaska, and I have practiced optometry in Wasilla since 1984.

I support SB 55 because it allows the State Board of Optometry to regulate the profession of optometry without unnecessary oversight from the medical profession. The new law will allow the Board of Optometry to determine when optometrists may perform new procedures and use new medications, only when their training allows, and without having to turn to the legislative process. It will not result in optometrists doing new procedures that are outside the scope of their training. SB 55 allows for the same level of Board oversight that several of our brothers and sisters in the medical professions have, including physicians and dentists. Please support SB 55 and allow optometrists to be regulated through the State Optometry Board.

Thank you for your consideration and support of SB 55. Respectfully,
Lynn J. Coon, OD, FAAO
Valley Eye Associates, P.C.

Dear Senator Stevens,

Please support SB 55. This bill will allow The Board of Optometry to authorize optometrists to practice based on education and training. For years ophthalmology has claimed that optometry is going to kill or maim the public when optometrists practice based on our education and training. If this was the case our malpractice insurance would cost more than \$485.00 per year. I hope that you will support this bill and recommend you fellow Senators to support it.

Yours truly, John T Shank