

House Industry Business and Labor

HB 1267

February 3, 2025

Chairman Warrey and Committee members:

The North Dakota Society of Eye Physicians and Surgeons (NDSEPS) largely supports HB 1267 "Telemedicine Bill". We support the need to eliminate virtual eye exams by requiring prescribing doctors to have a North Dakota Optometric license. This will provide the standard of care that our North Dakota residents deserve.

The HB 1267 amendment introduces terminology changes such as removing language that prohibits optometrists injecting pharmaceutical agents and introduces "invasive surgery" as a descriptor. Collectively, the NDSEPS and the American Academy of Ophthalmology (AAO) oppose these language changes as they increase the scope of optometry care to include injections within the eye or around the eye. Further, invasive surgery is a term that needs further definitions.

To address these issues, NDSEPS introduced a definition of surgery to clarify what constitutes surgery. To be clear, the NDSEPS amendment is not attempting to remove any current procedures performed by North Dakota Optometrists. The NDSEPS greatly respects and appreciates the excellent care provided by our optometry colleagues. We feel a clear and concise definition of invasive ocular surgery ensures patient safety and maintains high quality of surgical care.

Sincerely,

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