



Senate Committee on Public Health and Welfare
Proponent Testimony to Senate Bill 490
Presented by William Wilk, Senior Director of Government Affairs

Tuesday, February 20, 2024

Madam Chair and members of the committee, my name is William Wilk, Senior Director of Government Affairs for the Kansas Chamber. The Kansas Chamber appreciates the opportunity to submit proponent testimony to Senate Bill 490, a bill modifying the scope of practice for optometrists.

Senate Bill 490 would allow optometrist to perform procedures they are trained to do in optometry school. Medical technology advancements have enhanced and continue to improve for patient care and most importantly patient outcomes. Unfortunately, our state statues for optometrist have not kept up with the education and medical technology advancements.

Senate Bill 490 would increase access to care for Kansans seeking optometry treatment and would save patient time if optometrist were allowed to perform these procedures. We also believe the passage of this legislation would assist all optometrists and their practices to recruit and retain doctors. This legislation would allow graduate optometrists to practice the skills they are provided in their training and education. It is important to note Kansas would not be there first to modernize this scope of practice. Eleven other states, including Colorado, Oklahoma, and Arkansas optometrists are allowed to perform these services for their patients.

The Kansas Chamber will continue to advocate for the reform of our healthcare statues to keep pace with the advancements of medical technology while not sacrificing the safety for Kansans seeking and receiving treatment. This is simply allowing optometrists to perform procedures they are trained to perform.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support to Senate Bill 490, and I am happy to answer any questions you might have at the appropriate time.