

**ILLINOIS STATE MEDICAL SOCIETY (ISMS)
ILLINOIS SOCIETY OF EYE PHYSICIANS AND SURGEONS (ISEPS)**

OPPOSE SB 2899

**Efforts to Allow Optometrists to Perform Surgical Procedures
& Give Medication by Injection**

The physician members of ISMS and ISEPS respectively urge you to vote “NO” on SB 2899, a bill that would allow optometrists, who are not medical doctors, to perform certain surgical procedures and administer medications via injection.

This massive expansion of the optometry scope of practice removes the blanket prohibition of surgery and other invasive procedure by optometrist, who are not trained physicians. Patients often do not understand the difference in the education and training between an optometrist and an ophthalmologist and this expansion of scope via legislation will further blur that line. **This is not in the public’s best interest and will threaten patient safety.**

OPTOMETRISTS ARE NOT PHYSICIANS

Optometrists do not attend medical school, nor do they complete a residency in medicine and surgery. Optometric training is in no way comparable to that of an ophthalmologist, who is medical doctor with three to five years of *additional* eye disease training with real patients after completing their general medical education.

OPHTHALMOLOGIST PHYSICIANS PERFORM THESE SERVICES FOR ILLINOISANS

There is no need or public demand for this massive expansion. Illinois citizens are not deprived of competent eye surgery services provided by our state’s highly trained eye physicians and surgeons – ophthalmologists. The proposal SB 2899 would make Illinois one of the most permissive states in the nation in terms of allowing optometrists to perform medical procedures.

**PROPOSED SURGICAL PROCEDURES AND INJECTIONS
ARE NOT SIMPLE PROCEDURES**

One proposed procedure to be performed by optometrists is the chalazion treatment, which could require an incision on the inner lid of the eye. Injections – including subcutaneous, subconjunctival, and intramuscular injections – would be allowed. In addition, fluorescein angiography dyes may be injected intravenously. These are complicated procedures that should be performed by a trained physician.

There is simply no substitute for full surgical training to prepare one to perform these techniques. Further, the treating physician must be prepared for any and all complications arising from the technique, including infections, severe glaucoma, cataracts, bleeding in the eye, or a rupture of the eye itself. These complications will need immediate attention by the treating physician. Optometrists are not trained or capable of handling these complications.

Please Vote NO on SB 2899