



Members of the Ohio Senate Health Committee:

We, the members of Future Leaders in Sight, an organization of medical students who seek to become ophthalmologists, write to voice our strong opposition to Senate Bill 36. Our organization was founded in Cleveland and has since expanded to include chapters at all Ohio medical schools and over 135 medical schools nationwide.

As medical students and future ophthalmologists, we are deeply concerned that Senate Bill 36 threatens to lower the standards of training required to perform laser and eyelid surgeries, harming patients in the process.

We have already undergone four years of undergraduate training, and are now in the middle of four years of medical school to obtain general medical knowledge. Following this, our training will involve four years of ophthalmology residency and potentially another two years fellowship.

As the eyes are connected to and deeply integrated with the physiologic functions of the body, the general medical knowledge we gain in medical school is essential for providing the best quality care. Even in surgical procedures, this depth and breadth of medical knowledge is required to judge when surgery is necessary, safe, and beneficial, as the success and safety of surgery depend not only on the number of times a physician has performed that surgery, but also on the patient's overall medical condition.

Furthermore, a physician performing a surgery must also be prepared to manage any complications arising from the surgery. Knowing these things, and out of a dedication to our patients, we have embarked on a rigorous educational path that will prepare us to provide the most comprehensive and high-quality care possible. Anything less would represent a violation of our moral obligation to do no harm to patients in our care.

While our optometry colleagues play a vital role providing primary eye care as a part of the healthcare team, they lack both the length of training required to perform surgery as well as the medical knowledge required to judge when surgery should be done.

For these reasons, we urge you to vote against Senate Bill 36.

Sincerely,

The members of Future Leaders in Sight