



**Senate Health Committee
Ohio Vision Professionals Board
H.B. 110 SFY 2022-2023 Operating Budget
Marlene Anielski, Executive Director
April 20, 2021**

Good afternoon, Chair Huffman, Ranking Member Antonio and members of the Senate Health Committee. I truly appreciate the opportunity to provide an overview of the Ohio Vision Professionals Board (VPB) and our budget recommendations.

For a bit of history, the 132nd General Assembly consolidated the State Board of Optometry and the Optical Dispensers Board into the Ohio Vision Professionals Board in January of 2018. It achieved administrative efficiencies and regulatory functions. The VPB is the regulatory body for the licensing and registering of nearly 7,000 optometrists, opticians, ocularists and apprentices. VPB monitors compliance with continuing education requirements, approves provider program relevance to practice in Ohio and educates the licensees on the laws and rules which govern licensees and consumers on services provided by the licensees. The governing board is comprised of seven members appointed by the governor which include licensees and a public member.

The mission of the Ohio VPB is to provide statewide leadership in protecting and serving Ohioans by effectively and efficiently regulating the practices of optometrists, opticians, ocularists and apprentices. In 2020, the VPB accomplished many IT projects to electronically issue licenses and streamline the application processes. VPB has a standard of conduct for our licensees / registrants and internally handles all the investigations of all complaints against our licensed professionals for compliance with the applicable laws, rules and regulations. We strive to be a national leader for the establishment of professional practice standards and licensure of those professions. Our full-time staff with an executive director, an investigator and two administrative personnel.

The proposed budget is flat funded, which are the same budget figures as state fiscal year 2021. The budget funding for fiscal year 2022 is \$654,140. Funding for fiscal year 2023 is also \$654,140 for a total biennium budget of \$1.3 million. The Ohio Vision Professionals Board is self-supported through revenue generated from license applications and renewal fees. The VPB does not receive any funds from the State's General Revenue Fund. As required, by the Ohio Revised Code ORC 4734.54, all receipts of the VPB are deposited into the Occupational and Professional Licensing Fund, also known as the 4K90 fund. The VPB is one of the nearly 20 boards that deposit into the 4K90 fund.

In closing, I appreciate the opportunity to present the Ohio Vision Professionals Board's executive budget proposal to you today. The VPB has an enormous responsibility to act in the best interest in protecting and serving Ohioans with educated and ethical eyecare professionals with the highest levels of accountability. The VPB respectfully requests your support with an open and collaborative process with budget deliberations. I thank the committee for their time and attention and welcome your questions and comments.