

THE OHIO COUNCIL OF

Retail Merchants

The voice of retail since 1922

October 31, 2017

The Honorable Tom Brinkman, Chairman
Ohio House Insurance Committee
77 South High Street, 11th Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Brinkman and members of your committee:

The Ohio Council of Retail Merchants represents a number of retail businesses that provide vision care services to hundreds of thousands of Ohioans each year. From contracting with hundreds of optometrists to provide onsite examinations to employing thousands of opticians to assist with product selection and fitting to the tremendous volume of products sold in their stores, our members play a major role in serving Ohio consumers with their vision care needs. They also employ a significant number of Ohioans and have a definitive impact on Ohio's economy.

That being said, our members have a great deal of interest and concern in regard to House Bill 156. While we understand that the bill sponsor, Representative Schuring, is seeking to help Ohio consumers, our members believe that the bill will unfortunately do the opposite. They believe that some of the restrictions in the bill would increase the price of vision care materials and products and have a negative impact on provider networks in which they participate. This is often the result when governmental regulations interfere with private contracts. You have likely already heard from the experts on the validity of these concerns so I won't be repetitive with detailed explanations. The only point I will add that bears repeating is that consumers who are unable to obtain discounts in a retail setting will turn to online and often out-of-state sources for their vision care needs.

In closing, we respectfully ask that you do not pass House Bill 156 out of committee.

Sincerely,



Lora Miller
Director of Governmental Affairs and Public Relations

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