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EYECARE CENTER

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Governor Haley,

Your endorsement of S. 1016, the "Eye Care Consumer Protection" bill would establish requirements for a person who sells spectacles or contact lenses using refractive data or information generated by an automated testing device. Currently, Optometrists and Ophthalmologists licensed in S.C. must take into consideration MEDICAL FINDINGS made and REFRACTIVE ERRORS discovered during an eye examination in order to provide a VALID prescription for spectacles or contact lenses. Supporting this bill will maintain the standard of care our citizens deserve.

Medical findings like DIABETES, GLAUCOMA, CATARACTS, ACCOMMODATIVE INSUFFICIENCIES, and OCULAR MUSCLE MISALIGNMENTS cannot be detected by refractive data generated by an automated refractive device. Unfortunately, refractive devices are being marketed directly to S.C. consumers as an online "EYE EXAM" which claims to be as accurate as an in-person refractive exam. The F.D.A. has never reviewed the safety or efficacy of these devices, or the promotional claims made for the devices in their labeling. These devices pose serious significant public health concerns including not only the possibility of misdiagnosis of the user's refractive correction needs, but also the foregoing of professional, state-licensed care that could identify serious ocular diseases that require treatment before eyesight and/or general health and wellbeing is permanently impaired or lost.

Eye Care Professionals have always been in favor of new technology. We are constantly investing in new technologies for our practices that allow us to more efficiently detect and diagnose vision and eye health concerns at a much earlier rated. In fact, citizens want new health care technologies like those incorporated into my office and eye care practices across the state that strengthen the doctor/patient relationship and help make people healthier. However, we do not support technology that misleads the public as to what an eye exam is and can potentially delay timely care of potentially sight and life threatening conditions.

The overall impact on the citizens of S.C. could be:

- a) Lost jobs due to undiagnosed Diabetes Mellitus
 - 1.) Cannot drive to work
 - 2.) Cannot perform at peak levels because of loss of sight.
 - 3.) Increased sick days-more health visits
 - 4.) Higher state/personal healthcare costs

Again, I urge you to vote in favor is S.1016 in order to protect the vision and eye health of the citizens of South Carolina.

Professional,

Lori Rothermel
Eye Care Center
Simpsonville, SC