

TIME RECEIVED
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48

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2

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first vision group

DAVID HAMILL, O.D.

eye disease, pediatric eyecare, contact lenses

Governor Haley,

Your endorsement of S. 1016, the "Eye Care Consumer Protection" bill is paramount to guard and protect the health of our patients.

A large number of optometrists belong to a group named ODs on Facebook. Almost daily we read posts from members there describing instances where patients come in for eyeglasses due to blurred vision (or no visual symptoms at all) only to have their doctor discover a more serious situation or condition requiring medical management.

One example fresh in my mind was that involving an African American male who did not have a primary care physician went to his optometrist for new reading glasses. The optometrist discovered a very serious case of retinopathy caused by significantly elevated blood pressure. I have attached a photograph that the doctor included on his post. Along with the photo, the following is his follow-up post.

"Some of you may remember this post from March 30th. Soooo...my patient stopped by the office today to thank me for saving his life! He was admitted into ICU for 9 days with kidney failure and is currently going to dialysis 3 times per week. I will see him for follow up soon."



Had this patient gone to a kiosk or online to businesses like Opternative, he would have succeeded in getting a prescription for eyeglasses that may or may not have worked well for him. However, he might have suffered serious consequences from his high blood pressure, such as stroke, heart attack or death.

While we make progress convincing every person in South Carolina of the importance of a regular, thorough dilated exam, we certainly shouldn't make it easier for them to avoid it. Allowing kiosks and online refractions to serve South Carolinians would do just that.

I urge your support by signing S.1016 into law. By doing so, you are helping eye doctors to protect the vision and lives of all South Carolinians.

Respectfully,

David Hamill, O.D.

Florence, SC