

May 10thth, 2026

Dear Committee Members,

I am writing to ask for your support of bill S.64. It is a bill that will improve eye care for Vermonters, attract new talented optometrists to our state, and support optometry businesses in Vermont.

I am the owner of White River Family Eyecare in White River Junction Vermont, and I have practiced optometry there for over 25 years. I live in Windsor Vermont and have raised 3 children in that amazing community. I love this state and my patients!

I have been trying to hire a new doctor because my office is booked out over 12 months. It has been very hard to attract a doctor to come to Vermont. I have been looking for over 20 months without any serious applicants. I think a big part of why new ODs don't apply is the fact that Vermont does not allow optometrists to practice full scope like so many other states do. These states are attracting new graduates away from Vermont. Bill S.64 is trying to change that.

Vermont is a rural state, and many of my patients are elderly and travel long distances. My patients should be able to come to my office and receive the eye care they need and not have to be referred out to an ophthalmologist for procedures optometrists in many other states can perform. I treat many patients with glaucoma, and I find it frustrating that I have to refer them for SLT or LPI's which delays their care by many months. I regularly have elderly patients who need YAG laser on one of their cataract implants or SLT for their glaucoma and they have to wait several months before getting into Dartmouth. Additionally, styes and chalazions are painful and unsightly, and patients have to wait months for an appointment to get care with an ophthalmologist in our area. I want to be able to take care of my patients in my office, without the wait.

I love and care for my patients like my own family, and I believe my optometry colleagues in Vermont feel the same way. We want to provide excellent care to our patients. Excellent care in a timely fashion to help preserve vision and eye health is vital. We need to attract new ODs to our state! Our patients deserve great eye care by their optometrist that they know and trust.

Please Support S.64. I would love to talk with you if you have any questions.

Thank you for your time and service.

Best regards,

Sandra Dufour, O.D.



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