

Dear Representative Hango,

Please support S.64 as Recommended & Authored by the Secretary of State's Office. They are charged with **public safety**. They studied the issues extensively including the education, precedent & safety record in other states. They identified **safe space** for the bill.

**There is an access issue in Franklin County.** I've attached is a shortlist of my actual patients (consent given) who've either had to wait an **average of 5 months** to access S.64-procedures **locally** or an **average of 3.6 months** (still much too long) when local wait-times prompted patients to seek such necessary care in **Burlington**.

Compound the current access issue with the fact **Franklin County needs at least 6 ½ - 7 eye doctors – we only have 4!!!** Maybe **3** in the not-to-distant future – but I'll leave it to Dr. Johnson to speak for himself regarding his retirement plans. I've included him in this e-mail.

Consider the population demographic that S.64 stands to benefit the most – **our elderly population** - fixed incomes – some cycling in medical debt. Other barriers to care with this demographic include transportation issues, challenges to independent living, memory issues, medication compliance issues, polypharmacy issues (too many medications to keep track of), physical challenges to maintain self-care (i.e. neck stiffness &/or hand tremors that complicate eyedrop administration), dependency on others, etc...

**S.64** stands to **reduce Medicare reimbursement costs by 45% - 690%** per procedure pending location.

As you now know, my associate (Dr. Dan Phillips) has already taught and performed these procedures extensively in another state. We are increasingly sending many of our patients to Burlington to provide our patients quicker access to the straightforward office-based procedures outlined in S.64.

Please support S.64 as authored by the Secretary of State's Office. Too many people-hours have been exhausted on this bill for it to be quashed.

Thank you,  
Steve

Steven J. St. Marie, OD  
Northern Valley Eye Care, Inc.  
128 Fisher Pond Road  
St. Albans, VT 05478