I am writing to the committee in opposition to S.64 which the Senate Health and Welfare committee is considering. I have already given in-person testimony to the committee, but wanted to reiterate my position.

As a physician and ophthalmologist I take surgical intervention very seriously. I regularly perform all the procedures that are requested by my optometry colleagues.
I can say without reservation that the training pathways of ophthalmologists and optometrists are very different. **Proper surgical training for eye surgery requires thousands of hours of mentored training with skilled surgeons and hundreds of proctored procedures.** This rigorous and standardized training is only found in accredited ophthalmology residency programs.
Current optometry training for procedures is limited, widely varied, and fragmented. Prior iterations of this legislation have recommended only a brief weekend course as adequate training to perform these procedures and the current legislation is not substantively different. The eye is a very delicate organ with very little room for error. **Eye surgery is serious and should be treated as such.**

Legislation should certainly not put Vermonters at risk and it should also have a clear benefit to Vermonters. Will this bill bring cost savings to Vermonters or the healthcare system? **NO!**
The cost would be identical within the healthcare system.
Will it fill an overwhelming need? **Also No!** There are not long waiting lists for these elective procedures, certainly not at my office and not at others I have spoken with. In fact these are procedures that are among the most readily available, as they occur outside the hospital setting.

I urge you to stop this dangerous and unnecessary legislation.

Please contact me anytime with questions.

-Jeffery D Young, MD