



Hundredth Legislature - First Session - 2007
Introducer's Statement of Intent
LB 398

Chairperson: Joel Johnson
Committee: Health and Human Services
Date of Hearing: February 8, 2007

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

LB 398 is a recodification of the optometry practice statute. The bill is not intended to bring about any change in the legal scope of practice of licensed optometrists nor to make any other changes except to restate their practice law in a more logical and understandable fashion.

The need for LB 398 comes about from the history of the manner in which the practice of optometry has changed over the past two decades in our state. Originally, Nebraska optometrists were not allowed to even to place drops in a patient's eyes to dilate their pupils attendant to examinations. Over a period of a dozen years or so, optometrists were successful in convincing the Legislature that they should indeed be permitted to use topical diagnostic and then topical therapeutic agents, prescribe limited oral agents related to their scope of practice, and treat glaucoma with topical agents. Each time the law was changed additional education was required for optometrists then in practice.

The result has been that the optometry practice law has grown almost like topsy, requiring little short of a background in both law, legislative history, and optometry to get to a plain language interpretation. LB 398 is intended to correct that statutory maze with an up-to-date and understandable practice law for optometry.

Principal Introducer: _____
Senator Joel T. Johnson