



One Hundred First Legislature - First Session - 2009
Introducer's Statement of Intent
LB 417

Chairman: Tim Gay
Committee: Health and Human Services
Date of Hearing: March 4, 2009

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

Legislative Bill 417 changes provisions under the Optometry Practice Act. The legislation proposes to enhance the authorized scope of practice for licensed optometrists in order to better serve patients throughout Nebraska. The proposed changes can be summarized as follows:

1. Allow prescribing of any pharmaceutical agent rational to diagnosing or treating conditions of the eye, adnexa or visual system and remove present exclusions and lists of permitted conditions and drugs now contained in state law.
2. Allow pharmaceutical agents to be administered by injection, as well as topically or orally, by therapeutically-certified licensees.
3. Clarify that the practice of optometry includes prescribing and dispensing of cosmetic or plano contact lenses and contact lenses classified by FDA as a drug.
4. Create a new level of certification requirements for licensees which would authorize those doctors qualifying for such certification to perform minor surgical and non-surgical procedures including employment of laser procedures of the anterior segment of the human eye and adnexa.
5. Authorize the Board of Optometry to establish additional requirements and qualifications for the proposed new level of certification.

Principal Introducer:

Senator Mike Friend
District 10