



June 3, 2021

Chair Curt VanderWall
Vice Chair John Bizon
Minority Vice Chair Winnie Brinks
Michigan Senate Health Policy and Human Services Committee
Senate Hearing Room
Ground Floor, Boji Tower
124 W. Allegan Street
Lansing, MI 48933

Testimony in Support of House Bill 4356

Dear Chair VanderWall, Vice Chair Bizon, Minority Vice Chair Brinks, and members of the Michigan Senate Health Policy and Human Services Committee:

My name is Courtney Joslin and I am a resident fellow at the R Street Institute. R Street is a nonprofit, nonpartisan public policy research organization whose mission is to engage in policy research that supports free markets and limited, effective government. My research focus is on health care disintermediation and scope of practice reform. Today, I am testifying in support of House Bill 4356, which would allow Michigan residents to use online services to renew their contact lens prescriptions.

Most states allow Americans to enjoy being able to fill their contact lens prescriptions online except for a few—this few includes Michigan.¹ Using online services for quality eye care, such as renewing contact lens prescriptions online, is a safe and increasingly popular form of telehealth because of its competitive pricing and ease of use.

Using an online retailer to renew a contact lens prescription means fewer trips to an optometrist's office just to renew the same prescription an individual has maintained, as well as the ability to shop around online for the best prices on contact lenses. These benefits, as we have all recognized throughout the past year, are difficult to overstate. Convenience and affordability—especially when not sacrificing quality—are key.

Taking fewer trips to an optometrist also seems to align within best practices and safety standards of the industry; for example, the Mayo Clinic, as well as the American Academy of Ophthalmology, maintain that healthy adults do not need annual comprehensive eye exams.² For many with contact lens prescriptions, this means that the ability to obtain contact lenses through online retailers is not interfering with the quality of eye care they receive.

Further, this bill only allows for prescription renewals to take place online. This means that the initial contact lens prescription would still occur in-person in a medical office, so patients would still get properly fitted for contact lenses. This ensures further safety of this proposed model.

Allowing online contact lens prescription renewals will bring Michigan into the fold of what other states know well: the convenience, increased affordability and increased access that this model enables will ultimately benefit consumers. For these reasons, we recommend passage of House Bill 4356.

Thank you for your time,

Courtney Joslin
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¹ “The Issue,” Americans for Vision Care Innovation, last accessed June 2, 2021.

<https://americansforvisioncareinnovation.org/the-issue/>.

² “Eye exam,” Mayo Clinic, last accessed June 2, 2021. <https://www.mayoclinic.org/tests-procedures/eye-exam/about/pac-20384655>; David Turbert, “Eye Exam and Vision Testing Basics,” American Academy of Ophthalmology, Jan. 14, 2021. <https://www.aao.org/eye-health/tips-prevention/eye-exams-101>.