



AMERICAN SOCIETY OF
PLASTIC SURGEONS®



THE PLASTIC SURGERY
FOUNDATION®

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June 16, 2015

Chairman Robert Tomlinson
Minority Chairwoman Lisa Boscola
Senate Committee on Consumer Protection & Professional Licensure
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2183

RE: Support of Senate Bill 795

Dear Chairman Tomlinson, Minority Chairwoman Boscola and Honorable Members of the Senate Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure:

On behalf of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons (ASPS), I am writing in support of Senate Bill 795, which seeks to provide clarity in regards to optometric scope of practice as it relates to ophthalmic surgery. ASPS was founded in 1931 and represents over 7,000 physicians certified by the American Board of Plastic Surgery. This legislation will help protect patient safety by making it clear that only physician surgeons who are adequately trained to perform surgery of the eye or ocular adnexa are authorized to do so.

If passed, SB 795 would strengthen existing laws which already state that optometrists are not able to perform surgery. Current statute, however, does not clearly state that eye surgery, or ophthalmic surgery, is also out of the scope of training and education of optometrists. Complex medical procedures, such as eye surgery, fall squarely within the practice of medicine. Optometrists do not have the requisite medical school and residency training necessary to practice medicine. While ophthalmologists and plastic surgeons must attain a core medical and surgical education while completing seven to ten years of training, which includes increasing responsibility and decision-making authority in the hospital setting, optometrists only complete four to five years of education with significantly less clinical exposure and responsibility. Due to this training and education, physicians are uniquely qualified to treat patients in the rare instance that a life-threatening complication arises during a surgical procedure. The clarification provided by this bill will protect patient safety and the standard of surgical care in the state.

It is critical that surgical procedures involving the eye and ocular adnexa are performed by physician surgeons who have the comprehensive training and board certification to handle complications when they do occur. I again urge you to **support** SB 795, as it is currently written, in order to protect the high standard of patient care in Pennsylvania. If you have any questions or need further assistance, please feel free to contact Patrick Hermes, Senior Manager of Advocacy and Government Affairs at phermes@plasticsurgery.org.

Sincerely,

Scot Bradley Glasberg, MD
President, American Society of Plastic Surgeons

cc: Hon. Members of the Committee on Consumer Protection and Professional Licensure
Senator David Argall