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Testimony of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs

**Before the
House Committee on Health
Tuesday, January 29, 2019
8:30 a.m.
State Capitol, Conference Room 329**

**On the following measure:
H.B. 521, RELATING TO OCULARISTS**

Chair Mizuno and Members of the Committee:

My name is Christopher Fernandez, and I am the Executive Officer of the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs' (Department) Dispensing Opticians Program. The Department supports this bill.

The purpose of this bill is to specify that a certified ocularist, certified by a nationally recognized ocularistry certifying board, may perform duties within the scope of that certification.

Under Hawaii Revised Statutes (HRS) section 458-14, a certified ocularist recognized by the American Society of Ocularists may practice within the scope of that certification, provided that the ocularist: (1) performs only those functions dealing with the designing, fitting, and fabricating of artificial eyes, and not contact lenses of refractive value; and (2) is under the supervision of a licensed ophthalmologist or optometrist. This bill clarifies that ocularists must be certified by the American Board of Ocularistry, the National Examining Board of Ocularists, or any other nationally

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recognized ocularistry certifying board. This requirement will benefit Hawaii consumers by raising the credentialing standards of ocularists practicing in the State.

The Department further acknowledges that, although this bill amends HRS chapter 458, which governs dispensing opticians, this bill does not alter or impact their scope of practice.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this bill.

LATE

HB-521

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 4:45:36 PM

Testimony for HLT on 1/29/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Melodie Aduja	O`ahu County Committee on Legislative Priorities of the Democratic Party of Hawai`i	Support	No

Comments:

HB-521

Submitted on: 1/28/2019 3:21:20 PM

Testimony for HLT on 1/29/2019 8:30:00 AM

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
doss tannehill	Individual	Support	Yes

Comments:

HB 521

Honorable John Mizuno

Chair of the Health Committee

Dear Chairman Mizuno and members of the Health Committee:

I would like to testify in support of HB 521.

I am a second generation ocularist who has been practicing in Hawaii for over 46 years. During that time I have had the privilege of improving the lives of thousands of your constituents. I am a past president of the American Society of Ocularists and am currently the president of the International Academy of Ocularistry. I am board certified by the American Board of Ocularistry and the National Examining Board of Ocularists.

HB 521 would allow for the expansion of the number of certification boards that fulfill the requirements for licensure in the state of Hawaii.

The ABO was formed in response to NEBO's loss of accreditation due to a failure to comply with the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA) standards. The ABO was structured to comply with the standards of the NCCA and is currently moving towards accreditation. The secondary impetus for the creation of the ABO was to form a certifying body that would evaluate candidates based on an elevated standard of ocularistry care. A key component of this change was to move from anecdotal to evidence based practice. .

This change in the statute would benefit the citizens of Hawaii by allowing for the inclusion of ocularists certified to a higher standard as practicing ocularists in Hawaii.

Respectfully Submitted,

Doss K. Tannehill BS, BCO, FI