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STATE OF MAINE
ONE HUNDRED AND THIRTY SECOND LEGISLATURE
COMMITTEE ON HEALTH COVERAGE, INSURANCE AND FINANCIAL SERVICES

June 10, 2025

Joan Cohen
Commissioner
Department of Professional and Financial Regulation
35 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0035

Dear Commissioner Cohen:

As you know, the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services recently considered LD 1803, An Act to Amend the Laws Governing Optometric Practice. The bill, as amended, proposes to expand the scope of practice of licensed optometrists. While the committee notes the proposal meets the criteria for a sunrise review pursuant to the Maine Revised Statutes, Title 5, section 12015 and Title 32, chapter 1-A, subchapter 2, the committee agrees with the suggestion made by your staff that the convening of a stakeholder group to review the proposal will satisfy the committee's belief that the proposal needs additional time for your staff and the proponents and opponents of the bill to thoroughly review and discuss the proposal before moving forward with any statutory changes.

We are writing to request that you convene a stakeholder group to evaluate the proposal consistent with the criteria for a sunrise review and make any findings and recommendations for the committee's consideration. For the purposes of this review, the committee would like the stakeholder group to consider the laws in other states related to the scope of practice for optometrists, including those state laws that are similar to the proposal in LD 1803. The committee would also like the stakeholders to review and make recommendations for each of the substantive provisions making changes to an optometrist's scope of practice: the procedures authorized within an optometrist's scope of practice; the procedures not authorized within an optometrist's scope of practice; and the opioid prescribing authority of an optometrist. Finally, the committee would like the group to carefully consider the changes to the licensing board's authority to make changes to an optometrist's scope of practice in the bill.

As you know, the committee has carried over LD 1803 to the Second Regular Session. We request that the stakeholder group complete its work in a timely manner so that you may report its findings and recommendations to the committee no later than January 15, 2026 so the committee can take final action on the bill before the end of the Second Regular Session. If you

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have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us or our legislative analyst, Colleen McCarthy Reid.

Sincerely,



Sen. Donna Bailey
Senate Chair



Rep. Kristi Michele Mathieson
House Chair

cc: Penny Vaillancourt, Deputy Commissioner
Members, Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial
Services