

To: All Members of the General Assembly  
FROM: Representative Harry Readshaw  
DATE: February 11, 2011  
RE: Co-sponsorship: To prevent disparity among vision benefits plans  
(HB 1107, PN 1303 of 2009)

I will be re-introducing this legislation to prevent competitive disparity among vision benefit plans. This legislation will attempt to restore a “level playing field” in the optical industry. Ensure both patient freedom of choice when selecting a provider and providers’ freedom of choice to choose materials, fabrication and source of products, a uniform provider contract to allow a fair and equitable provider reimbursement.

Currently some vision plans create a competitive disparity between independent eye care providers and corporate competitors through a policy of creating different levels of provider participation. Independent providers are compelled to use the vision benefit plan’s laboratories and products while some commercial optical providers and large groups are permitted to use their own laboratories and their own products. Some plans also are entering into contracts with select providers that pay higher levels of reimbursement to those providers than other providers for the same services and products. Lastly some plans’ ophthalmic material contracts mandate that participating providers order ophthalmic materials from suppliers owned or contracted by the vision benefit plan.

These policies have the effect of not only reducing patient choice but it puts at risk many independent local eye care providers and optical laboratories, who are not able to negotiate the same arrangements with insurers. My legislation will address these situations and make vision care accessible, affordable and offer some level of protection for independent eye care providers.

If you wish to cosponsor this legislation, please contact Margaret Tricarico at [mtricarico@pahouse.net](mailto:mtricarico@pahouse.net) or 717-772-5568 (Democratic Caucus Ext. 6168).

Prior co-sponsors: READSHAW, MUSTIO, MOUL, GRUCELA, HALUSKA, W. KELLER, KORTZ, MARSHALL, PHILLIPS, SIPTROTH, WALKO, YOUNGBLOOD AND HARKINS