History

• IN 1975 WHEN DOCTORS OF OPTOMETRY PASSED A LAW ALLOWING THEM TO USE DIAGNOSTIC PHARMACEUTICAL AGENTS THE OPPOSITION SAID WE WOULD BLIND AND KILL PEOPLE. THEY WERE WRONG- IT DIDN’T HAPPEN!
• IN 1993 WHEN DOCTORS OF OPTOMETRY PASSED A LAW ALLOWING THEM TO USE PHARMACEUTICAL AGENTS TO TREAT EYE DISEASE THE OPPOSITION SAID WE WOULD BLIND AND KILL PEOPLE. THEY WERE WRONG- IT DIDN’T HAPPEN!
• IN 2005 WHEN DOCTORS OF OPTOMETRY PASSED A LAW ALLOWING THEM TO USE CONTROLLED SUBSTANCES TO TREAT EYE PAIN THE OPPOSITION SAID WE WOULD BLIND AND KILL PEOPLE. THEY WERE WRONG- IT DIDN’T HAPPEN!
• IN 2007 WHEN DOCTORS OF OPTOMETRY PASSED A LAW ALLOWING THEM TO USE ALL ORAL AND TOPICAL PHARMACEUTICAL AGENTS TO TREAT EYE DISEASE THE OPPOSITION SAID WE WOULD BLIND AND KILL PEOPLE. THEY WERE WRONG- IT DIDN’T HAPPEN!
• WITH THIS BILL THE OPPOSITION WILL SAY THAT WE ARE GOING TO BLIND AND KILL PEOPLE. AGAIN THEY ARE WRONG- IT WON’T HAPPEN!
• IT IS THE SAME OLD STALE ARGUMENT THAT THEY HAVE USED FOR OVER 35 YEARS. THEY WERE WRONG THEN AND THEY ARE WRONG NOW! THIS BILL, LIKE ALL THE OTHERS, WILL HELP THE PEOPLE OF LOUISIANA
• WE BELIEVE NO BILL THAT DOCTORS OF OPTOMETRY HAVE PASSED HAS CAUSED LEGISLATORS TO LATER REGRET VOTING FOR IT
• EVERY EXPANSION OF SCOPE BILL THAT THE DOCTORS OF OPTOMETRY HAVE PASSED HAS HELPED THE PEOPLE OF LOUISIANA
A perfect example of why the optometry board should determine the scope of practice is the medicated contact lens. A great idea, put the lens on the eye and the medication treats the disease continuously instead of being washed out quickly as is the case with eye drops.

Even though we could prescribe medication and could prescribe contact lenses, we could not prescribe contact lenses containing medication!

So we had to come to the legislature and pass a bill to allow us to use them.

It would have been much easier if the optometry board had simply considered the situation. Are doctors of optometry qualified to use these lenses? Do they understand the positives? The negatives? Are they capable of managing any side effects? And the answer, of course, would have been yes and the board could have made that decision and the problem resolved without an act of the legislature.

Another reason that this is a better way is that legislators might not want to make decisions of this kind and might be uncomfortable doing so. The board, on the other hand, are all experts in this field and are comfortable making these decisions.