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**Health Care Committee**

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**HB 2547**

**Brief Description:** Authorizing optometrists to use and prescribe approved drugs for diagnostic or therapeutic purposes without limitation upon the methods of delivery in the practice of optometry.

**Sponsors:** Representatives Kessler, Campbell, Lisk, Ruderman, Rockefeller, Grant, Conway, Armstrong, Alexander, Cody, Linville, McMorris, Clements, Pflug, Hankins, Chase, Edwards, Simpson, Quall, Veloria and Jackley.

**Brief Summary of Bill**

- Optometrists may be certified by the Board of Optometry for the use or prescription of legend (prescription) drugs and controlled substances for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes related to the practice of optometry, after completing specified hours of didactic and clinical instruction.
- Optometrists may be certified by the board for using or prescribing drugs administered orally after completing additional specified hours of instruction.
- Optometrists may be certified by the board to administer drugs by injection for anaphylactic shock after completing additional specified hours of instruction.
- Retinal repair surgery, laser surgery, and the use of Schedule I controlled substances are expressly not authorized.

**Hearing Date:** 1/31/02

**Staff:** John Welsh (786-7133).

**Background:**

The practice of optometry is licensed by the Department of Health and involves the examination of the human eye, the examination and ascertaining of any defects of the human vision system, and the analysis of the process of vision. The Board of Optometry examines applicants for licensing and acts as the disciplinary authority, and otherwise governs the practice of optometry.

The scope of practice of optometry includes the use of topically applied drugs for diagnostic

and therapeutic purposes. Optometrists certified by the board for using topically applied drugs for diagnostic purposes must have a minimum of 60 hours of didactic and clinical instruction in general and ocular pharmacology as applied to optometry and be certified by the board. Optometrists administering topically applied drugs for therapeutic purposes must have an additional 75 hours of didactic and clinical instruction, and be certified by the board. The board must establish a schedule of drugs limited to the practice of optometry for optometric practice.

**Summary of Bill:**

An optometrist certified by the Board of Optometry may use legend (prescription) drugs and controlled substances listed in Schedules II through V for diagnostic and therapeutic purposes.

An optometrist using or prescribing drugs administered orally for therapeutic purposes must have an additional 16 hours of didactic instruction and 8 hours of supervised clinical instruction, and be certified by the board.

An optometrist administering epinephrine by injection for treatment of anaphylactic shock must have an additional 4 hours of didactic and clinical instruction, and be certified by the board.

The board must establish a list of Schedule II through V controlled substances, after consultation with the Board of Pharmacy, and no optometrist may use, prescribe, dispense, purchase, possess, or administer these drugs except as authorized and permitted by the board.

The board must establish by rule specific guidelines for the prescription and administration of drugs.

An optometrist may not prescribe, dispense, or administer a controlled substance for more than seven days in treating a particular patient for a single trauma or for pain associated to the trauma.

Prescriptions or administrations of authorized drugs are limited to those drugs appropriate to the treatment of diseases or conditions of the eye and the adnexa within the scope of optometric practice.

Retinal repair surgery or laser in situ keratomileusis surgery or the use of Schedule I controlled substances is expressly not authorized in the optometry practice act.

**Appropriation:** None.

**Fiscal Note:** Not Requested.

**Effective Date:** Ninety days after adjournment of session in which bill is passed.