



Olds Plaza Building, 10th Floor
Lansing, Michigan 48909
Phone: 517/373-6466

COVERAGE OF OPTOMETRY

House Bill 4555 with committee
amendment

First Analysis (3-23-95)

Sponsor: Rep. David M. Gubow
Committee: Health Policy

THE APPARENT PROBLEM:

Public Act 384 of 1984 (House Bill 4331) expanded the scope of practice of optometrists to allow those in the profession who meet certain certification standards to prescribe and administer certain therapeutic drugs. A bill that dealt with the scope of practice of chiropractors, Senate Bill 493, was also before the legislature but was not enacted. Shortly after, a series of bills were passed to exempt third party health insurance payers from having to pay for the expanded optometric services and from having to pay for the expanded chiropractic services should Senate Bill 493 become law. The bill that applied to worker's compensation benefits, House Bill 4570, was tie-barred, perhaps out of confusion, to Senate Bill 493, and so its provisions could not take effect (although it was enacted). Its provisions need to be re-enacted.

THE CONTENT OF THE BILL:

The bill would amend the Worker's Disability Compensation Act to specify that an employer would not be required to reimburse or cause to be reimbursed charges for an optometric service unless the service was included under the scope of practice for optometrists as of May 20, 1992.

MCL 418.35

FISCAL IMPLICATIONS:

It should be noted that the bill simply reiterates language put into the act last session that could not, for technical reasons, take effect.

ARGUMENTS:

For:

The bill would, in essence, make effective the provisions regarding optometry benefits added to the worker's compensation statute last year by House Bill 4570. The provisions were enacted but

could not take effect due to a tie-bar that should have applied only to chiropractic services.

POSITIONS:

There are no positions on the bill.

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