

## ***Jessilin Quint, OD, MBA, MS, FAAO***

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255 Western Ave, Augusta, ME 04330  
207.622.5800  
[quint.jessilin@gmail.com](mailto:quint.jessilin@gmail.com)

To: Members of the Maine Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services

May 9, 2025

Re: Support of LD 1803

Dear Senator Bailey, Representative Mathieson, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Dr. Jessilin Quint and I'm writing in **support of LD 1803**. I'm a Doctor of Optometry and practice owner, with offices in Augusta, Bangor, and Farmingdale. I am the current President of the Maine Optometric Association and an Associate Professor for Indiana University School of Optometry. I've been practicing optometry for over ten years. In addition to caring for patients across Maine, I teach optometry students during their clinical rotations and provide continuing education to tens of thousands of Doctors of Optometry across the country.

I provide care for patients of all ages, but the majority of my patients are older and suffer from chronic eye conditions such as glaucoma, cataracts, and other ocular diseases. While I'm fully trained and educated to diagnose, treat, and manage these conditions, including performing in-office procedures, my ability to provide complete care is currently restricted by outdated scope-of-practice laws. As a result, my patients face delays, redundant appointments, and unnecessary costs when they are referred elsewhere for treatments that I am fully qualified to perform.

LD 1803 addresses this gap in care. This legislation is thoughtfully written to improve access and reduce strain on the Maine healthcare system while maintaining patient safety. It includes specific exclusions that optometrists will **not** be allowed to perform like cataract surgery, LASIK, or retinal surgeries.

The in-office procedures included in LD 1803 are minimally invasive and can be done using topical or local anesthesia. Let me be clear-these procedures are **NOT** done in an operating room or surgical center. These procedures typically take less than five minutes and do **NOT** involve cutting or injections into the eye. They are often painless, and patients immediately resume all activities following completion of these procedures.

Across the country, this model is already working. Optometrists in 44 states have the authority to prescribe oral steroids, 14 states perform both lasers and injections, and 25 states perform injections. There are currently 8 additional states with legislation to expand scope this year. In some states, these procedures have been performed safely for over **25 years**. No state has ever reversed a scope expansion, and malpractice rates have not increased. In fact, some of these

states have the lowest malpractice rates in the nation. Most importantly, expanded scope laws have improved access to care, particularly in rural and underserved communities.

Can optometrists safely perform these in-office procedures? Yes and the data proves it. A study published last year reviewed over **140,000 laser procedures** performed by optometrists in 12 states<sup>1</sup>. The results showed an exceptional safety record thanks to the rigorous education and continuing training provided by optometry programs in the United States. It should also be noted that optometrists are held to the same standard of care as ophthalmologists.

Doctors of Optometry are the primary eye care providers here in Maine. We independently diagnose and treat complex eye conditions. We currently manage glaucoma, infections, inflammation, and perform other in-office procedures that are minimally invasive like foreign body removal and punctal plug insertion. We are trained not only in ocular diseases, but also in systemic health conditions that impact the eyes.

As Maine's population ages, demand for accessible eye care is growing. LD 1803 allows us to meet that need. LD 1803 aligns the legal optometric scope with the education Doctors of Optometry receive, while giving patients safe and efficient care.

Thank you for your time and support of LD 1803.

Sincerely,

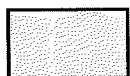
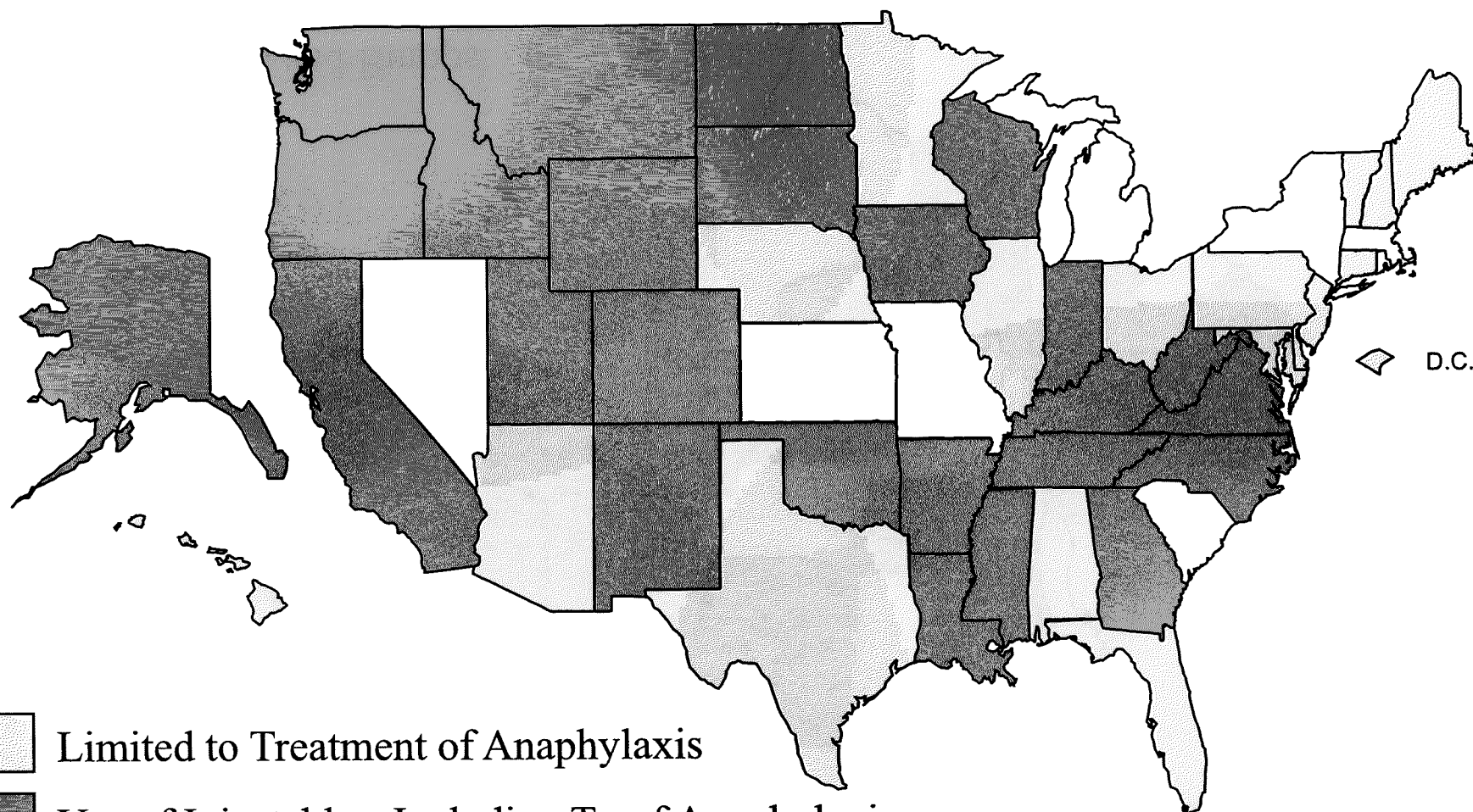
A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J. Quint', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jessilin Quint, OD, MBA, MS, FAAO

<sup>1</sup>Lighthizer N, Patel K, Cockrell D, et al. Establishment and review of educational programs to train optometrists in laser procedures and injections. Clin Experiment Optom. July 24, 2024

# Injectable Authority

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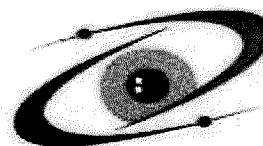
Limited to Treatment of Anaphylaxis



Use of Injectables, Including Tx of Anaphylaxis



American Optometric Association

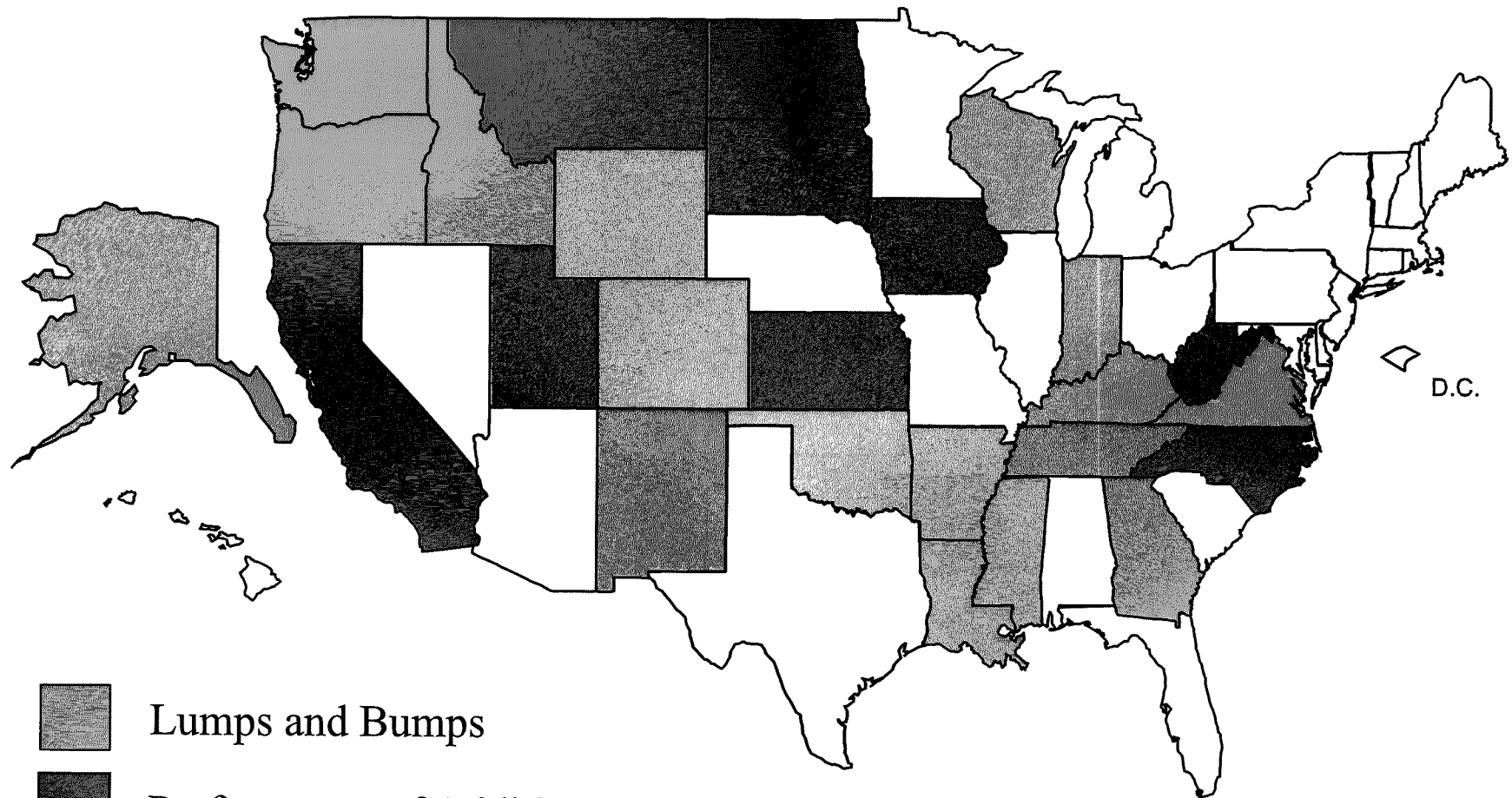


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OPTOMETRIC ASSOCIATION

Seeing health through YOUR eyes.

# Ophthalmic Procedures Beyond Foreign Body Removal and Treatment of the Lacrimal System

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D.C.



Lumps and Bumps



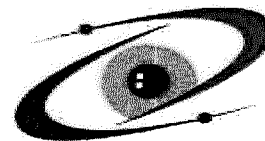
Performance of Additional Ophthalmic Procedures as Authorized by State



Laser Privileges, includes Lumps and Bumps



American Optometric Association

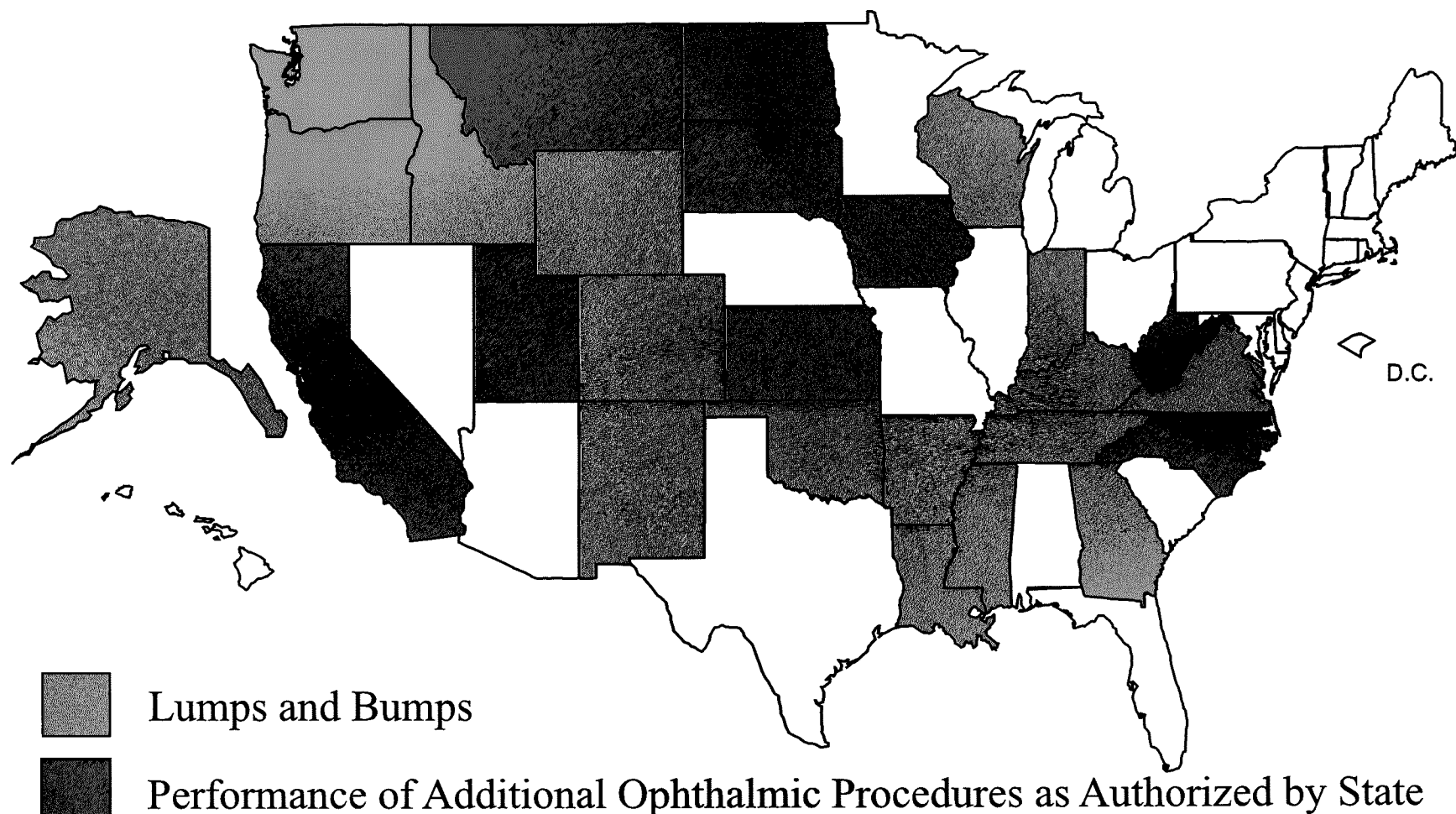


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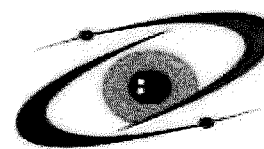
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# Ophthalmic Procedures Beyond Foreign Body Removal and Treatment of the Lacrimal System

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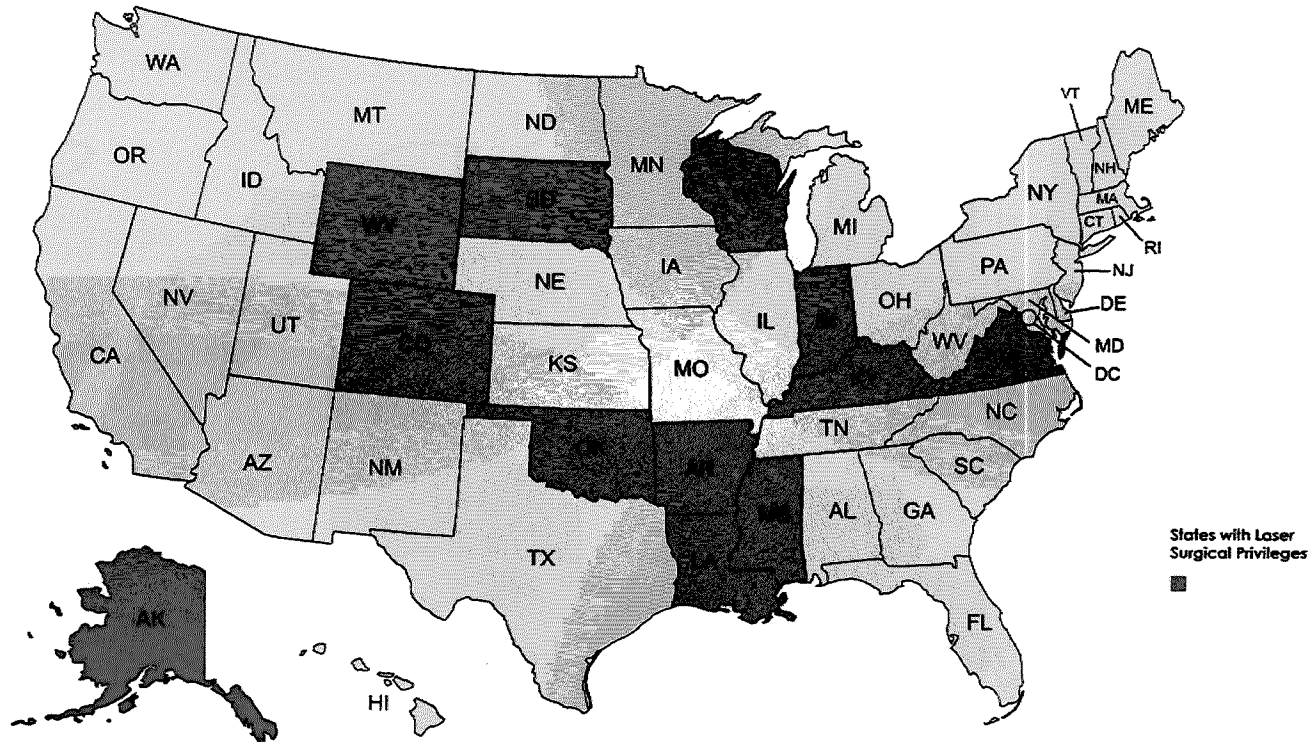



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# States with Laser Privileges

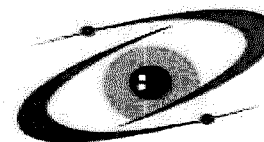
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 Laser privileges



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