



Statement of Brian T. Lynch, O.D.
Connecticut Association of Optometrists
Insurance and Real Estate Committee
July 21, 2020

Senator Lesser, Representative Scanlon, Senator Kelly, Representative Pavalock-D'Amato and members of the committee:

My name is Dr. Brian T. Lynch. I am an Optometric Doctor practicing in Branford and serve as the legislative chair for the Connecticut Association of Optometrists. I would like to offer comments on behalf of our members today in regard to LCO 3614, An Act Concerning Telehealth.

Our profession has been included and involved with telehealth since the original statute was enacted in 2015. A number of my colleagues participate in this technology. We have found this to be an effective and convenient way of communicating with patients who are not able to attend an in-person appointment. This became even more important when the pandemic hit with many medical practices closing or operating at reduced levels for emergency care only.

We treat patients for a number of diseases, including diabetes, which we have used remote technology to discuss with a patient their progress and adherence to the treatment program.

An Act Concerning Telehealth essentially takes the telehealth program as changed by Governor Lamont through Executive Orders 7G, 7DD, 7FF, and extends this structure through June 30, 2021. Among the changes the Governor authorized was the use of audio-only telehealth (telephone). This has enabled additional Optometrists to be involved in consulting patients remotely.

The Connecticut Association of Optometrists appreciate that our members are authorized providers of this service through next June. We look forward to additional discussions on making permanent enhancements and changes to the current telehealth law in the 2021 session. Thank you.