

pharmaceuticals as well as treat glaucoma had went through the 407 process. What's basically approved is contained in this amendment is a technical review process which is the...more technicians, they approved, this was all right, in their opinion, as well as the Board of Health approved prescribing oral pharmaceuticals as well as treating the glaucoma which is something that could and should, without any danger to the public and it would be actually advantageous to have that within the scope of practice. Now, as you are well aware, there are three stages of that scope of practice. A year ago, at least, when the...and still is, when the director of the Department of Health, who was the third process, it was a medical doctor, at that time it was Dr. Wright, and he is the only stage of the process, which said, no. And so, basically, what I would argue the two unbiased boards said this is all right. And, given that guidance, that was the guidance which guided me, a lay person, to say after understanding in talking...talking to both the optometrists and ophthalmologists this could be done. Well, there are many arguments for the bill. You know, doctors of optometry are numerous and better distributed across the state than ophthalmologists. You know, doctors of optometry in other states are doing this in Iowa, in Oklahoma, Wyoming and nine other states, they are both...they're prescribing oral pharmaceuticals and treating glaucoma. It's something that's happening. And there are many optometrists in the State of Nebraska that are licensed to do this in Iowa. So it does happen and we have a track record to follow from there. But that's a brief introduction to the bill. Amendment to the amendment we were talking about today, amendment 2391, does a variety of things. First off, when we introduced LB 503 last year, obviously, if optometrists are going to be more active in prescribing oral pharmaceuticals and treating glaucoma, I think it is reasonable and prudent and wise to ask those optometrists to take some additional education. So the first part of the amendment, or not really part of it, the first thing that's embodied in this amendment is a requirement that a minimum of 44 hours of additional education and successful completion of a state approved exam is reinserted in the bill, because the way the committee and the body eventually amended the bill on last year and had such a tight jurisdiction of the ophthalmologists, they had removed that restriction for education, I think it's wise, I think we all should agree we should reinsert that. And, obviously, the optometrists would have to pay the price and take the time to do that. I don't think that's unreasonable, giving what we're talking about here. Another part of the amendment