

HOUSE No. 1925

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Bradley H. Jones, Jr.

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying bill:

An Act studying the impacts of the diagnosis restrictions on optometrists.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Bradley H. Jones, Jr.</i>	<i>20th Middlesex</i>
<i>Bradford Hill</i>	<i>4th Essex</i>
<i>Elizabeth A. Poirier</i>	<i>14th Bristol</i>
<i>Susan Williams Gifford</i>	<i>2nd Plymouth</i>
<i>Paul K. Frost</i>	<i>7th Worcester</i>
<i>Todd M. Smola</i>	<i>1st Hampden</i>
<i>Randy Hunt</i>	<i>5th Barnstable</i>
<i>William L. Crocker, Jr.</i>	<i>2nd Barnstable</i>
<i>Steven S. Howitt</i>	<i>4th Bristol</i>
<i>Michael J. Soter</i>	<i>8th Worcester</i>
<i>Hannah Kane</i>	<i>11th Worcester</i>
<i>David T. Vieira</i>	<i>3rd Barnstable</i>
<i>Bruce E. Tarr</i>	<i>First Essex and Middlesex</i>

HOUSE No. 1925

By Mr. Jones of North Reading, a petition (accompanied by bill, House, No. 1925) of Bradley H. Jones, Jr. and others that the Department of Public Health and the Department of Professional Licensure produce a report on costs of the current restriction preventing optometrists from treating glaucoma. Public Health.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-First General Court
(2019-2020)**

An Act studying the impacts of the diagnosis restrictions on optometrists.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 Notwithstanding any special or general law to the contrary, the Department of Public
2 Health and the Department of Professional Licensure, in conjunction with the Board of
3 Registration in Optometry, shall produce a report on costs imposed on Massachusetts residents
4 from the current restriction that prevents optometrists from treating glaucoma. The consumer
5 cost analysis shall include average fees imposed from referrals to ophthalmologists for treatment;
6 average wait times for an appointment for an ophthalmologist; ratio of licensed optometrists to
7 ophthalmologists in the Commonwealth; percentage of optometrists students, whom upon
8 graduation, seek employment outside of the state; and availability of access to an
9 ophthalmologist for underserved populations including low income groups and residents in rural
10 areas. The report shall also include a comparison of treatment provided in Massachusetts to
11 similar care provided throughout the rest of the nation. The Commissioner of the Department of
12 Public Health shall include recommendations on whether the scope of practice for optometrists

13 should be expanded and what restrictions should be in place if optometrists are permitted to treat
14 glaucoma.

15 Upon completion of the cost analysis report, the Department of Public Health and Board
16 of Registration in Optometry shall first hold a public hearing for state officials, stakeholders and
17 members of the public to testify. Following the public hearing, the Commissioner of Public
18 Health shall be authorized to broaden the scope of practice for optometrists to treat glaucoma
19 with limitations to be determined by the Department of Public Health and Division of
20 Professional Licensure consistent with the report.