



Board of Examiners in Optometry

Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

Mesheca C. Bunyon, Board President – Gwendolyn A. Joyner, Executive Director

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2023 SESSION POSITION PAPER

BILL NO: SB 728
COMMITTEE: Finance
POSITION: Support with Amendment

TITLE: State Board of Examiners in Optometry – Sunset Extension

BILL ANALYSIS:

The Bill, as written, extends the termination provisions relating to the statutory and regulatory authority of the State Board of Examiners in Optometry (the “Board”) for three (3) years until July 1, 2026.

POSITION AND RATIONALE:

The Board supports SB 728 with an amendment of the Bill to extend the termination provisions relating to the statutory and regulatory authority of the Board to ten (10) years, until July 1, 2033.

This Bill was introduced during the 2022 Session and the original version of the bill included a provision to extend the Board for ten (10) years, which is the usual and customary timeframe. At that time, despite the Board’s request for another ten-year extension, the previous administration amended the Bill to extend the Board for only three years, until July 1, 2026.

The Board recognizes that its primary role is to protect the health and safety of consumers through the licensing and regulation of the practice of Optometry. The passing of SB 728 with the proposed amendment will ensure the continuation of the Board’s mandated responsibilities to carry out its mission to protect the citizens of Maryland without interruption.

The Board supports SB 728 with amendment and respectfully asks to extend the termination provisions relating to the statutory and regulatory authority of the Board, to the following:

Amendment 1

Page 2, line 3: Strike **2026** and insert **2033**.

The Board appreciates your consideration and requests a favorable report for SB 728 with amendment. Please do not hesitate to contact Gwendolyn Joyner, Executive Director at gwendolyna.joyner@maryland.gov or at 410-764-5994 if you have any questions.

The opinion of the Board expressed in this document does not necessarily reflect that of the Department of Health or the Administration.