



State of South Carolina Office of the Governor

NIKKI R. HALEY
GOVERNOR

1205 PENDLETON STREET
COLUMBIA 29201

May 16, 2016

The Honorable Henry D. McMaster
President of the Senate
Statehouse, Second Floor
Columbia, South Carolina 29201

Dear Mr. President and Members of the Senate,

Today, I am vetoing and returning without my approval, R.178, S.1016, a bill that requires prescriptions from a licensed optometrist or ophthalmologist to receive glasses or contacts based on an in-person comprehensive eye examination. **I am vetoing this bill because it uses health practice mandates to stifle competition for the benefit of a single industry,** effectively banning eye care kiosks statewide.

During my administration, South Carolina has expanded access to healthcare, including mental health services, to rural and underserved regions of our state using telemedicine. Unfortunately, a small group of eye care professionals are seeking to block new technologies that expand low-cost access to vision correction services, using two basic arguments.

First, advocates state that kiosks pose a public health risk, which is simply untrue. Individuals can, and should, continue to see their doctor for comprehensive medical exams, and these kiosks do not offer medical evaluations or advice. Second, optometrists argue that kiosks create an uneven playing field because licensed providers cannot take advantage of this technology and charge patients for its use in a medical practice. The answer to this problem is not to ban a new technology, but rather to expand its use. **Send a bill to my desk that allows for the expanded use of automatic vision evaluations in all medical settings, and I will sign it.**

If allowed to become law, South Carolina would become the eighth state to impose such a ban, putting us on the leading edge of protectionism, not innovation. This is the wrong message to send to the business community. **I urge you to continue promoting South Carolina's use of innovative technologies to expand access to medical care and sustain this veto.**

My very best,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Nikki Haley".

Nikki R. Haley