



TECHNET
THE VOICE OF THE
INNOVATION ECONOMY

February 13, 2019

Sen. Annette Cleveland, Chair
Senate Committee on Health and Long Term Care
Washington State Legislature
220 John A. Cherberg Building
Olympia, WA 98504

Dear Chair Cleveland:

RE: SB 5759 – Ban on Ocular Telemedicine

On behalf of TechNet, I am writing today in opposition of SB 5759 regarding ocular telemedicine. TechNet is the national, bipartisan network of innovation economy CEOs and senior executives. Our diverse membership includes dynamic American businesses ranging from startups to the most iconic companies on the planet and represents over three million employees and countless customers in the fields of information technology, e-commerce, the sharing and gig economies, advanced energy, cybersecurity, venture capital, and finance.

SB 5759 will ban ocular telemedicine/online vision testing, denying Washington consumers safe and effective options to innovative eye care technologies that lower costs and increase access to care. SB 5759 prohibits the use of this innovative technology by placing unnecessary regulations and undue burdens upon companies that are solving vision care needs of consumers in Washington State (and have been for numerous years).

TechNet encourages state leaders to adopt smart, adaptive, and long-range strategies that foster innovation, enhance global competitiveness, promote job growth and retention, build highly skilled workforces, and provide improved services to constituents with successful, consumer-oriented models. Washington State already has statutes and regulations in place that govern the use of telemedicine tools, and SB 5759 is an attempt to circumvent these rules which contradicts the legislature's support of innovation in health care and telemedicine.

Innovation in health care can reduce costs for consumers, a top goal for Washington leaders, while maintaining high-quality care. Many consumers do not have employer-sponsored vision coverage and pay over \$150 out of pocket to see an optometrist for an eye exam, which limits access to eye care for many consumers. Online vision testing and ocular telemedicine allow consumers access to a safe, affordable, convenient solution for necessary eye care.

Thank you in advance for your consideration on this matter. TechNet appreciates the important and ongoing conversations around this legislation and we hope to stay engaged. Please do not hesitate to reach out if I may be able to provide you with additional information.

Sincerely,

/s/

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CC: Members of the Washington State Senate Health and Long Term Care Committee