



STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Department of Labor and Training

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Daniel J. McKee
Governor
Matthew D. Weldon
Director

February 14, 2024

The Honorable Susan R. Donovan, Chairwoman
House Health and Human Services Committee
State House
Providence, RI 02903

Dear Chairwoman Donovan:

I write today in support of House bill 7297 introduced by Representative Finkelman that adds the completion of a registered apprenticeship program to the criteria for optician licensure.

The Department of Labor and Training is a strong supporter of registered apprenticeship programs. It is an employer-driven model that provides an effective way for employers to recruit, train and retain highly skilled workers. The Department supports this proposal to establish an apprenticeship program for opticians, further expanding this proven model of job preparation.

Establishing an optician apprenticeship program will provide an alternative to a post-secondary degree requirement. This will bring Rhode Island into alignment with the other states that require optician licensure by providing an apprenticeship as an alternative to a two-year degree.

We appreciate the opportunity to express our support for House bill 7297 and ask for the Committee's support of this legislation. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Jason Martiesian, Assistant Director, at 462.8139 or Jason.martiesian@dlt.ri.gov.

Sincerely,

Matthew D. Weldon
Director

cc. The Honorable Alex Finkelman
House Health and Human Services Committee members