

7/31/2020

The Honorable Roger Wicker  
Chairman  
United States Senate Commerce Committee  
512 Dirksen Senate Building  
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Maria Cantwell  
Ranking Member  
United States Senate Commerce Committee  
512 Dirksen Senate Building  
Washington DC, 20510

Dear Chairman Wicker, Ranking Member Cantwell and distinguished members of the US Senate Commerce Committee,

As you prepare for your Federal Trade Commission (FTC) Oversight Hearing on Wednesday, we wanted to take this opportunity to again stress our strong and united support for the updated Contact Lens Rule. The FTC issued this unanimous, bipartisan rule on June 23, 2020 after five-plus years of careful review. The Rule strengthens and protects the rights of consumers, and increases choice and competition in the contact lens marketplace. It is supported by [27 Attorneys General](#) from across the country on both sides of the aisle, as well as medical professionals, anti-trust experts, local, state and national consumer and taxpayer advocacy groups. Perhaps most significantly, millions of people who wear contact lenses support the new rule.

Despite overarching support for the updated rule, the optometric trade association is attempting to stop the rule or delay it further by adding language that undermines its implementation. We urge you and your colleagues to side with supporters from across the political spectrum and consumers in every state of the country to stop any efforts to do so through the Senate Committee.

We firmly believe that consumers' rights are sacrificed if this rule is further delayed. Millions of consumers should not be forced to pay higher prices for contact lenses at a time when many are facing serious financial difficulties only to protect a special interest—the optometry lobby.

Now more than ever, as America adjusts to life during this pandemic, consumers need to be able to access and utilize their own contact lens prescriptions. They deserve more options and choice when buying lenses, not fewer. Taxpayers, who help to



fund government employee insurance and public health programs, also deserve the savings that contact lens choice can deliver. We cannot and must not delay it any longer.

The FTC conducted a thorough, comprehensive and transparent rule review process over many years that included numerous options for public comments and a public workshop specific to the rule. In the end, they came down squarely on the side of consumers, taxpayers, competition, and choice in a 5-0 bipartisan vote of approval. We hope that you and the Committee will stand with consumers and taxpayers in support of the updated unanimous FTC Contact Lens Rule.

Thank you for your support. Please don't hesitate to reach out to any of our organizations if you have questions as you consider this matter.

The Coalition for Contact Lens Consumer Choice

- Ken McEldowney, Executive Director Consumer Action
- Pete Sepp, President National Taxpayers Union
- Dr. Elena Rios, President and CEO National Hispanic Medical Association
- Sindy Benavides, CEO League of United Latin American Citizens
- Lindsay Mark Lewis, Executive Director Progressive Policy Institute
- C. Jarrett Dieterle, Commercial Freedom Director R Street Institute
- Chuck Muth, President Citizen Outreach
- David Williams, President Taxpayers Protection Alliance
- Alexander Hendrie, Director Americans for Tax Reform
- Cary Samourkachian, President and CEO Lens.com
- Allison Fleming, Vice President 1800 Contacts

