

RE: Fairness to Contact Lens Consumers Act

I have practiced optometry and prescribed contact lenses for my patients in Kansas for nearly 30 years. I am writing with a concern about the Fairness to Contact Lens Consumers Act.

I received a request from 1-800-contacts for the verification of a contact lens prescription on a patient that I had not examined in more than three years. As I had written the prescription with an expiration date of 18 months following the examination, I explained to the caller that I could not renew or verify the prescription for the patient without another eye health examination.

As a follow-up on this patient, I called 1-800-contacts back to see if they had indeed filled the prescription for the patient. They declined to tell me whether they had or had not and also refused to send me such verification via the mail. As the patient no longer lives in our area, we were unable to contact the patient to see if he had received contacts through that company.

Had such a request come from a pharmacy to verify a prescription for medication, they would have been obligated to tell us if they had filled that prescription for that patient or not. These internet and mail order contact lens companies should be held to the same standards of prescription release as the pharmacies and should be required to acknowledge to the prescribing doctor when a prescription written by that doctor has indeed been filled by their company. To flatly refuse to do that is inexcusable.

I hope when the standards are completed in the Fairness to Contact Lens Consumers Act that verification of filling a contact lens prescription by mail order suppliers is clearly defined.

William D. Vietti, O.D.