

Retina Eye Surgeons Warn Lowering Eye Surgery Licensing Requirements Not in Californians' Best Interests

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Safe Eyes America →
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PITTSBURGH, Aug. 22, 2022 /PRNewswire/-- The American Society of Retina Specialists (ASRS), the largest retina specialty organization in the world joins Safe Eyes America in strong opposition to AB 2236, legislation now under consideration in the California Senate.

AB 2236 dangerously reduces the medical education, clinical, and surgical training requirements to become licensed in California to perform eye surgery. If AB 2236 were to be enacted, an individual would no longer be required to complete medical school and the required surgical training to become licensed to perform eye surgery. ASRS and Safe Eyes America point out that such a large reduction in surgical licensing requirements is detrimental to patient surgical outcomes and safety.

Retina specialists are ophthalmologists (physicians who complete 4 years of medical school followed by 4 years of training in eye diseases and surgery) with an additional 2 years specializing in treatment of the retina (the delicate structure in the deepest part of the eye that converts light into nerve signals necessary for vision). As a part of their training, all retina specialists are trained to perform all of the surgical procedures included in AB 2236. That knowledge of eye surgery, its risks, what it involves, and the consequences to the patient are the basis of the ASRS position opposing AB 2236

Kurt Heitman, MD, Safe Eyes America Board member says: "Every surgical procedure performed on the eye or eyelids requires education, training and experience to make the correct diagnosis, to make a decision on the best treatment be it surgery or not, and to develop the ability to perform the procedure. These are skills developed over years and shortcuts are just not safe for patients. A mistake anywhere along the path to surgery could have vision or even life-threatening consequences for the patient."

Any day now, the California Senate will vote on AB 2236. Jeanette Moffa, a concerned patient and Safe Eyes America Board member said, "We're proud to have ASRS, America's retina specialists, join us in educating patients about the dangerous changes to the law present in AB 2236. Lowering the licensing requirements to allow non-medical physicians



The Retina - Located in the back of the eye, it converts light images into the nerve signals that become our view of the world. Like the rest of the eye - beautiful, delicate, precious, and deserving of every protection. (PRNewfoto/Safe Eyes America)

(optometrists) to perform surgery is not safe. Californians need to know this."

The California state Senate could take final action on AB 2236 any day now. It simply isn't safe. Please contact your California state Senator **NOW** and urge them to **Vote NO on AB 2236**. To find your state Senator click on the following link: (<https://findyourrep.legislature.ca.gov/>). The California legislature adjourns for the year on August 31.

About Safe Eyes America

Safe Eyes America is a 501(c) 4 non-profit organization dedicated to promoting the delivery of the highest quality medical and surgical eye care to the American public. **SafeEyesAmerica.org**.

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