

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 9, 2023

Contact:
Info@healthyvisionassociation.com

HEALTHY VISION ASSOCIATION FILES LAWSUIT AGAINST STATE OF TEXAS FOLLOWING ENACTMENT OF HOUSE BILL 1696

ST. LOUIS, August 9, 2023 – The [Healthy Vision Association](#) announced today it has filed a lawsuit against the State of Texas following the recent passage of HB 1696 into law, as it is a clear violation of commercial speech protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution.

Dedicated to helping people see well and be healthy by providing access to products, services, and information that promote vision and overall health, the Healthy Vision Association was joined in the lawsuit by the [National Association of Vision Care Plans](#) (NAVCP), among other plaintiffs.

“Consumers have the absolute right to receive information that will help them make the most informed decisions on where and how they access affordable and value-driven care,” said Rich Schindehette, President of the Healthy Vision Association. “This new law is extremely troubling, and we are prepared to fight together for the rights of patients and consumers to receive all relevant and critical information they deserve when making healthcare decisions.”

The law imposes unconstitutional restraint on the right of managed vision care companies to communicate important healthcare information to insured patients, including how to maximize their benefits through specific providers, or even distinguishing in-network providers from other providers.

“This law makes it harder for Texans to access care and significantly limits value and choice in the marketplace by limiting the ability of managed vision care companies to freely promote, advocate, and market annual vision care visits,” said Julian Roberts, Executive Director of NAVCP. “In addition to harming patients, it also negatively impacts providers who voluntarily participate in managed vision care programs, as it will reduce patient flow opportunities and increase barriers to care.”

The new law directly conflicts with the recently enacted HB 711, which prohibits healthcare providers from entering into contracts that impose anti-steering and anti-tiering restrictions upon insurance networks. In doing so, HB 711 protects the rights of insurers to provide price information to insured patients and consumers, encouraging provider competition and reducing healthcare costs. But as a result of HB 1696, consumers and patients of optometry will be denied the very same information and cost-saving opportunities deemed worthy of protection outside of vision care.

###

About The Healthy Vision Association

The Healthy Vision Association is a non-profit member centric association dedicated to helping its members see well and be healthy. Since 2004, the Healthy Vision Association has been dedicated to providing benefits, services and information that promote vision health, overall health and wellness.

About NAVCP

NAVCP is a nonprofit association serving as a unified voice for the managed vision care industry. The association provides a forum for cooperative industry collaboration on initiatives that work to preserve and strengthen consumer access to affordable vision insurance and benefits. NAVCP members cover approximately 66 percent (over 218 million) of all Americans by partnering with eye care providers in all 50 states and Puerto Rico.