



May 20, 2003

Rep. Henry Waxman  
2204 Rayburn HB  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Rep. Waxman:

As President and CEO of the nation's leading volunteer eye health and safety organization, I wish to voice my support for your legislation that clarifies classification of all contact lenses under the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) as medical devices.

Prevent Blindness America (PBA) believes that the April 4 decision by the FDA, reclassifying decorative, non-corrective contact lenses as cosmetics instead of medical devices is a very harmful policy decision for consumers. The FDA seems to be disregarding their own concerns, as well as those of the medical community, the vision industry, and our nations' schools about the serious health risks caused by the improper use of these lenses. As you know, many of these cases have been well documented and publicized by the media during the last year.

If consumers are able to purchase these contact lenses without a prescription legally, the number of eye injuries will skyrocket. Companies eager to make money will capitalize on this freedom at the expense of innocent consumers. The proliferation of these unregulated lenses, as well as contact lens solutions will pose a significant public health risk.

Our nation's health would be best served if the FDA enforces the regulation of decorative lenses as prescription medical devices. Many Americans may suffer or perhaps even lose their sight if Congress does not act on this issue, so I thank you on behalf of PBA for introducing this important legislation.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Hugh R. Parry", written in a cursive style.

Hugh R. Parry, President & CEO