

state.

SENATOR ABOUD: Okay. Do the...are they viewed as doctors by this state?

SENATOR MOORE: I don't know the answer to that.

SENATOR ABOUD: Okay. Are they under the...are they viewed as doctors under our medical malpractice laws?

SENATOR MOORE: I don't know the answer to that, Senator Abboud.

SENATOR ABOUD: So you don't know the qualifications of these people that you are carrying a bill for.

SENATOR MOORE: I mean, I don't know whether...I mean, not being an attorney, I never had any desire on this bill to look up the malpractice statutes.

SENATOR ABOUD: Well, I was just thinking if we have a situation where optometrists do commit malpractice, I just wondered what happens. Let's, I mean Senator Kristensen is talking about these horrors that are going to take place, and I'm thinking, well, what are the options available if an optometrist commits medical malpractice and he results in someone having a loss of eyesight, what are that person's, the patient's options? I mean, obviously, first off, the Department of Health can pull his license for let's say improper practice as an optometrist, that's the obvious one, but what comes into place if malpractice, in fact, takes place? Do you have any idea on that?

SENATOR MOORE: The answer to your question is yes, they are treated just like doctors under the malpractice statutes.

SENATOR ABOUD: Okay, do you have some more information there for me?

SENATOR MOORE: The education is on your desk. We passed that out.

SENATOR ABOUD: Okay.

SENATOR MOORE: But the malpractice, I mean, the issue you talk about could happen with topical drugs already. I mean, and as