

viously the term "profession" has a different meaning in that context. So I don't attach any great significance to the fact that states describe optometry as a profession. To me it is no different than calling prize-fighting a profession.

It is a basis for licensing. That is the reason for use of the term "profession" is as a basis for licensing and that is why you have so many courts in the old days—and I saw from last year's record—there are many cases, but many of them were old cases. They were cases which probably involved the licensing problem and in order to justify licensing they called optometry a profession and to that extent it is. I think optometry should be licensed. I have no quarrel with that at all.

Mr. GUDE. Do optometrists in the State of New York advertise?

Mr. WEINMANN. No. Optometrists do not advertise in the State of New York. Opticians do.

Mr. SISK. We have sitting with us the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Fuqua, a member of the full committee, who is very much interested in this.

Mr. FUQUA. Do you consider the 1924 law we are operating under in the District of Columbia to be a model law?

Mr. WEINMANN. No, I do not. I think there is need for revision. I think there that the law should be updated. I commend the subcommittee for looking into this question. There is no reason why it shouldn't be updated. I would say many laws that are 40 or 50 years old require revision from time to time to keep up with the times.

What I am objecting to is that the guts of this particular bill is not the professionalism. That is a cloak brought in here by the AOA. The real guts of the bill is to outlaw the practice of optometry by corporations.

We in New York State have found—and this was litigated in the courts of New York—that in 50 years history there is no harm done to anybody; there has never been demonstrated any harm to anybody so long as licensed optometrists are employed by corporations. We think that that is the crux of the matter. We are not quarreling with updating the law. We are only quarreling with inserting language which would enrich the salon optometrist at the expense of the general public, which would then be forced to pay the higher prices which the salon optometrist demands. That is all it is as far as we are concerned. It is a matter of competition.

Salon optometrists are out to drive out the low-cost corporations which deal on an efficient and volume basis.

Incidentally, I would like to stand corrected on an observation I made a little earlier. I said that optometrists do not advertise in the State of New York. They don't in general, but they do on a limited basis. That is what the subject of the litigation is. They advertise, for example, in a store window. It is a mild form of advertising. A very mild form, but even that has been subjected to attack by the Board of Regents in New York and ultimately it will be determined.

Mr. SISK. Approximately how many optometrists does your union represent?

Mr. WEINMANN. Hundreds. Our Local 408 alone represents hundreds of optometrists in the State of New York.