

and are practicing in North Carolina, Virginia, Pennsylvania, and places like that.

Mr. WHITENER. And you have how many members in your Society?

Dr. BERLIN. Forty-eight members and nine associate members.

Mr. WHITENER. What are associate members?

Dr. BERLIN. Associate members are those optometrists who belong to the American Optometric Association in the neighboring states of Northern Virginia and Central Maryland.

Mr. WHITENER. Thank you.

Mr. SISK. The gentleman from Ohio, Mr. Harsha.

Mr. HARSHA. Dr. Berlin, you say there have been no changes in the law in regard to optometry since 1924?

Dr. BERLIN. Yes.

Mr. HARSHA. As I understand it, there is a Board of Optometry appointed here by the Board of Commissioners, is there not?

Dr. BERLIN. That is true; there is a Board of Optometry.

Mr. HARSHA. Some five optometrists?

Dr. BERLIN. There are five members on the Board.

Mr. HARSHA. And they are charged with the responsibility of licensing those who practice optometry?

Dr. BERLIN. Yes.

Mr. HARSHA. They also have the responsibility of drafting the educational standards or improving them over and above what is written into the law, do they not?

Dr. BERLIN. Yes, sir.

Mr. HARSHA. They may make them more stringent at any time. The only thing they cannot do is lower them below the standards that are in the law. Why, if they are so interested in upgrading the practice of optometry, has not this Board made significant changes in the educational standards required for the practice of optometry in the District?

Dr. BERLIN. I think Dr. Warren could answer that for us, and I think they have made changes through the years.

Dr. WARREN. The one change—and any change has to be approved by the Commissioners of course. The one change has been I think in 1950 or 1951 when examinations were given in contact lenses. But the examinations are quite stringent, have always been, and we feel the examination we give is on a par with those throughout the nation.

Mr. HARSHA. Is there any change in this latest bill, H.R. 12276, in the requirements that you presently operate under?

Dr. WARREN. The purpose of this bill does not really change the requirements for taking an examination. We feel the optometrists coming out of the schools today are quite adequately trained. The problem here is that once they are licensed in the District of Columbia, we have absolutely no control over doing anything with them regardless of what they might do.

I have just finished serving a term on the Board and I am now no longer eligible to serve on the Board, which Mr. Whitener will be interested in, because last year at the hearing he said to be a member of the Board you have to be practicing for a certain number of years. The District Commissioners have now added another regulation of their own, that you must be a resident of the District of Columbia before you can serve on the Board.