

be done because as the act is now drawn the practices covered by this bill can *only be done by optometrists* licensed under the provisions of this act. If not changed, this will eliminate the nurses and technicians working under a physician's supervision and other areas of concern.

Section 3 should be amended and optometry should be defined as it is now defined in the District of Columbia Code. As presently defined by law, "the practice of optometry is defined to be the application of optical principles through technical methods and devices in the examinations of the human eye for the purposes of determining visual defects and the adaptation of lenses or prisms for the aid and relief thereof." The definition suggested also deals with the prescribing of contact lenses or eyeglasses as presently worded.

These bills would authorize optometrists to engage in "the identification of any departure from the normal condition or function of the human eye including its associated structures". Such broad terminology will carry the optometrists into the field of practicing medicine. "Associated structures" in medical terms includes the brain, the lacrimal apparatus, the eye lids, the paranasal sinuses, the endocrine glands, and many other things which the optometrist *should not* be involved with at all.

It has been brought out in past hearings on similar bills that an optometrist under the existing law cannot use drops, dyes, drugs or any other chemical which comes in contact with the human eye; therefore, Congress should make this clear by adding on page 6 of the bill a new subsection titles (1a) "The use of drops, dyes, drugs, medicine, or any other chemical which comes in contact with the eye."

We suggest that the word "profession" should be deleted from Section 7(a) (15) on page 9 of the bill and the word "optometric" be substituted. We also suggest that a new Section (20) should be inserted on page 9 of the bill and that this be paragraph (7) from page 12 of the bill. H.R. 1283 should be clarified in order to provide that the adapting and fitting of lenses, prisms, and contact lenses be the only phase of the bill which requires a written prescription from a physician or an optometrist licensed to practice medicine or optometry. Accordingly, Section 8(4) on page 11 of the bill should be so written as indicated.

The requirement that the physician or optometrist be licensed to practice in the District of Columbia only, should be eliminated from the bill in order to afford the millions of visitors who come to the District of Columbia the right to have lenses, prisms or contact lenses made when they have a written prescription from a physician or optometrist licensed to practice outside the District of Columbia.

Section 8(7) which appears on page 12 of the bill should be taken out of this section of the bill and be added as paragraph (20) to Sec. 7 of the bill as indicated earlier in this statement.

Page 13 of the bill should be amended to read as follows:

Sec. 9(a) (2)—"To any member in the armed services in the District of Columbia acting in the performance of his military duties;"

Sec. 9(b) should be amended to read as follows:

"This Act shall not apply to a physician and/or surgeon practicing medicine or surgery under the laws of the District of Columbia, nor to nurses and technicians acting under their direction."

Sec. 9(c) pages 13-14 of the bill should be clarified and it should read as follows:

"This Act shall not apply to any person who fills the written prescription of a physician, surgeon or an optometrist."

Page 15. Sec. 9(e) should be amended to read: "Nothing in this act shall be deemed to authorize an optometrist to use the title 'doctor' or any abbreviation thereof except that if he uses such title or such an abbreviation it must be followed by the title optometrist."

Page 15 Sec. 10(a) the word "ophthalmic" should be deleted and "optometric" inserted in lieu thereof, and after the word "materials" insert "by optometrists." Line 22 "ophthalmic" should be deleted and "optometric" be substituted.

The word "ophthalmic" also appears on lines 8 and 12 page 16 of the same section this word should be deleted and in its place the word "optometric" inserted in lieu thereof.

On line 8 of the same page, the words "by optometrists" should be inserted after the word "materials."

Section 13(c), page 18, should be deleted in its entirety. This Section of the bill attempts by legislation to make the optometrist an expert to testify by merely possessing a license and also attempts to have his certificates accepted as qualified evidence once he obtains a license under the act to practice optometry.