

My name is J. A. Miller, I speak as Executive Secretary of the Guild of Prescription Opticians of America, Inc. on behalf of our national association and our Washington, D.C. affiliate, the Guild of Prescription Opticians of Washington, D.C. The Guild of Prescription Opticians is a national non-profit membership corporation representing skilled and ethical dispensing opticians throughout the United States, including the District of Columbia.

Mr. Paul Pattysen, President of the Washington, D.C. Guild and also president of the District of Columbia Association of Dispensing Opticians planned to be here this morning. He has been here on other days of the hearing, but, unfortunately, he has been in an automobile accident and is unable to be present today. Mr. Alfred Teunis will be here a little later. He has been delayed. These opticians has asked me to speak for them and for other opticians similarly situated.

These opticians are engaged solely in the dispensing of eyeglasses, and/or contact lenses and other optical materials. They and their employees do not refract eyes nor are they in any way associated with any refractionist, whether he be physician, surgeon, osteopath and optometrist.

Also with me is Joseph Stoutenburgh of the firm of Dawson, Griffin, Pickens and Riddell, special counsel for our national association, and Robert W. Burton, counsel for our local organization.

Since it is my understanding that the transcript of the hearings last year on H.R. 12937 and similar bills will be made part of the proceedings of this hearing, I will direct my remarks primarily to the new provisions contained in H.R. 12276, which has been referred to as a cure-all. Gentlemen, it is not.

At this time, however, I wish to submit for the record a copy of my letter of March 31, 1966 which was hand-delivered to the Committee and to each member of the Committee but which was not printed in either edition of the transcript of the hearings on H.R. 12937. This letter, which was prepared in response to a request by the committee, contains our suggested amendments which are equally applicable to the bills under consideration as they were to the bills considered by the 90th Congress.

Mr. Chairman, will this letter be made part of the transcript?

Mr. SISK. Without objection, that may be submitted for the record and will become a part of the transcript.

Mr. MILLER. Thank you.

Mr. SISK. Do I understand that last year you requested a letter to be made part of the record, and you did turn it over but, however, we failed to make it a part of last year's transcript?

Mr. MILLER. That is correct, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. SISK. Let me say, as one member of this subcommittee, although last year I was not chairman, I am sorry that happened. I do not know what the circumstances may have been; but, at any rate, your letter will be made a part of the record.

You may proceed.

Mr. MILLER. We look with favor on efforts to upgrade and improve the practice of optometry but this bill goes farther than that. It takes away traditional rights of dispensing opticians who have an older place in the history of eyecare than the optometrist and restricts his legitimate and appropriate business of serving the public both to