

improve themselves to the point that they were capable of examining patients for the purpose of prescribing eyeglasses. Unfortunately, when they had achieved this position, they continued to demand that they had the right to sell the eyeglasses.

I feel, as the No. 4 recommendation, it would be that the optometrists begin to direct themselves to the task of getting out of the business of selling eyeglasses and to devote themselves to the professional services which will then help them to achieve the professional status that they desire.

Members of the Subcommittee, I am not opposed to this bill in some senses, but I am opposed to it because I feel we cannot allow a bill to pass which will create great problems for the public and contribute to the detriment of the public and the inconvenience of the public and would accomplish nothing for them but would accomplish a great deal for those who have proposed this bill.

I thank you for this opportunity.

Mr. SISK. Thank you for your statement.

Your prepared statement will be printed herein in full.

(The prepared statement submitted by Mr. Rowe reads in full as follows:)

STATEMENT OF GALEN E. ROWE, JR. O.D., PRESIDENT, THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF OPTOMETRISTS AND OPTICIANS

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Galen Rowe. I am an optometrist, licensed in the State of Colorado since 1947. I appear here today as president and representative of the National Association of Optometrists and Opticians. This association is a national organization comprised of optical firms, companies and individual optometrists and opticians engaged in the optical business throughout the United States. Membership in the associations is represented by owners and operators of optometric and optical retail offices. The organization represents approximately 400 individual optical offices with over 2,000 employees. Our members serve over three million optical consumers each year.

The NAOO is concerned and alarmed at the potential effects of passage of HR 1283 because, if enacted, the bill would serve the interests of only a few optometrists and definitely *not* the welfare of the residents of the District of Columbia. An identical bill (HR 2937) was introduced into the 89th Congress, and it was opposed at that time by the following groups:

- The District of Columbia Bar Association
- The District of Columbia Government
- The Guild of Prescription Opticians of America
- The Guild of Prescription Opticians of Washington, D.C.
- The Medical Society of the District of Columbia
- The American Newspaper Publishers Association
- The District Wholesale Drug Corporation
- The Houston Ophthalmological Society
- The American Association of Ophthalmologists
- The National Association of Broadcasters
- The Maryland-Delaware-District of Columbia Jewelers Association
- The National Newspaper Association
- The Northern Virginia Academy of Ophthalmology
- The Ophthalmic Dispensing Association of Texas
- The Texas Ophthalmological Association
- The National Association of Optometrists and Opticians
- Washington, D.C. Publisher's Association.

It was supported by the American Optometric Association and some of its state affiliates.

The number of citizens represented by the opposition, in contrast to those represented by the proponents, was woefully disproportionate. Because the committee considering the bill at that time recognized that the testimony against the passage of HR 12937 represented such a considerably larger segment of the