

GOVERNMENT OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA,
EXECUTIVE OFFICE,
Washington, May 18, 1967.

Hon. JOHN L. McMILLAN,
Chairman, Committee on the District of Columbia, U.S. House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. McMILLAN: The Commissioners of the District of Columbia have for report H.R. 595, H.R. 732, and H.R. 1283, 90th Congress, substantially similar bills, "To amend the Act of May 28, 1924, to revise existing law relating to the examination, licensure, registration, and regulation of optometrists in the District of Columbia, and for other purposes." Each of these bills amends in its entirety the Act entitled "An Act to regulate the practice of optometry in the District of Columbia", approved May 28, 1924 (43 Stat. 177; D.C. Code, sec. 2-501 et seq.; hereinafter, "the Act").

Initially, the Commissioners desire to note that on January 30, 1967, they forwarded to the Congress draft legislation "To revise and modernize procedures relating to the licensing by the District of Columbia of persons engaged in certain occupations, professions, businesses, trades, and callings, and for other purposes", introduced in the Senate on April 13, 1967 as S. 1535. A primary purpose of the Commissioners' proposed bill is to relieve the Congress of the constantly recurring necessity of amending twenty Acts of Congress governing the licensing of more than that number of occupations, professions, businesses, trades and callings (including the practice of optometry), by vesting in the Commissioners authority by regulation to revise and modernize these statutes. If the Commissioners' proposed bill should be enacted, it would be possible for them to establish higher standards in the practice of optometry, to the extent such action is indicated, and to take similar action with respect to the standards applicable to the other occupations, professions, businesses, trades and callings specified in the Commissioners' proposed bill, without the necessity for continual requests to the Congress respecting amendments to these various statutes. The Commissioners accordingly urge the enactment of their proposed District of Columbia Licensing Procedures Act, rather than H.R. 595, H.R. 732, or H.R. 1283.

In addition, the Commissioners have considered the provisions of these bills and have concluded that they impose requirements which are, to a large extent, inferior to those of the present law relating to optometry. An analysis of the provisions of these bills is attached for the consideration of the Committee.

However, if the Committee determines that the enactment of any of these bills is desirable, the Commissioners recommend the attached amendments, which are substantially similar to those proposed by the Medical Society of the District of Columbia, the Guild of Prescription Opticians, the Bar Association of the District of Columbia, and the Commissioners, to similar bills in the 89th Congress.

Sincerely yours,

/S/ WALTER N. TOBRINER,
President, Board of Commissioners, D.C.

ANALYSIS OF PROVISIONS OF H.R. 595, H.R. 732 AND H.R. 1283.

The first section of each of the bills replaces the Act with an act comprised of fifteen sections. References in this report to a "proposed section" mean one of such fifteen substitute sections.

The proposed section 1 gives the Act the title "District of Columbia Optometry Act."

The proposed section 2 declares optometry to be a profession; states its practice affects the public health, welfare, and safety, thus requiring regulations; and declares that the practice of optometry should be limited to qualified persons, admitted to practice under provisions of the bills.

The proposed section 3 of H.R. 732 contains definitions, including the following:

"(2) 'practice of optometry' means any one, any combination, or all of the following acts or practices: the employment of any objective or subjective means for the examination of the human eye, including its associated structures; the measurement of the powers or range of human vision; the determination of the accommodative and refractive powers of the human eye; the determination of the scope of the functions of the human eye in general; the prescription, adaptation, use or furnishing of lenses, prisms, or frames for the aid thereof; the prescribing, directing the use of, or administering vision training or orthoptics, and the use of any optical device in connection therewith; the prescribing of