

There can be no better way to alleviate this problem than to create a separate eye institute. It will provide the impetus needed, in both public and private programs.

Objections to the creation of a separate eye institute have been raised in the past on the grounds that it would be difficult to recruit and staff such a separate institute because of the salary differential between Government and private practice.

Perhaps in some individual cases, this may be a factor. I submit that the real reason is not salary, but rather that when a highly qualified ophthalmologist is approached, his primary concern will be the degree of authority and freedom he will have to conduct his research program.

I talked to many of the leading ophthalmologists in the country during their conference in Chicago last year and they all agree we could recruit many more ophthalmologists in Government service if we had this separate institute.

How large a staff will he have? Will their efforts be devoted solely to eye research?

Certainly under the present structure, it would be difficult to answer these questions in the affirmative. I am confident that if more support were given to eye research with the National Institutes of Health, there would be no problem in attracting highly qualified ophthalmologists.

Finally, it has been suggested by some that instead of creating a separate eye institute, there be developed a national eye research program to be planned and organized by a special subcommittee of the National Advisory Neurological Diseases and Blindness Council on Vision and Visual Disorders.

I would like to point out that such a program was only mentioned after I first introduced my bill nearly 2 years ago.

Incidentally, gentleman, in this Congress today there are 38 similar bills in the House and 52 bills in the Senate. To me setting up this special program is still in the talking stages and I doubt whether or not this would be accomplished in the next 5 or 10 years.

During the past several years, the charge has often been made that Congress merely reacts to the desires of the executive branch of Government.

In this respect, I would only say that in the creation of a National Eye Institute, Congress certainly has an opportunity to take the initiative in supporting what is clearly the well-known, well-publicized wish and need of the American people.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. JARMAN. We do certainly thank you for a strong, effective statement on this subject.

Are there comments by the committee?

Mr. ROGERS. I want to join the chairman in his statement. The statement is excellent and I think you have pointed up some of the problems this committee is very anxious to go into to see if we could bring about increased emphasis in research if it were set up separately.

Mr. NELSEN. I have no questions.

I merely want to thank my colleague for his appearance.

Mr. CARTER. Certainly I want to thank the gentleman for his appearance and his excellent presentation along this line. As a physician, I am aware of the fact that not enough research is being done in this field.