

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE,
Los Angeles, Calif., February 21, 1966.

HON. HERBERT TENZER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR CONGRESSMAN TENZER: In reply to your request for comments concerning establishment of a National Eye Institute, may I state that I wholeheartedly endorse this proposed legislation and am pleased to know that you are planning to cosponsor this amendment to the Public Health Service Act.

Prior to receiving your communication, I wrote Congressman Alphonzo Bell, representative of the district in which I reside, indicating my support for this proposed legislation.

Sincerely yours,

BRADLEY R. STRAATSMA, M.D.,
Professor of Surgery and Chief, Division of Ophthalmology.

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE,
New York, N.Y., February 24, 1966.

HON. HERBERT TENZER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR MR. TENZER: May I express my gratification at being asked to discuss the proposal for a National Eye Institute, introduced as H.R. 12373 by Congressman ROONEY. I am heartily in favor of this measure which will go a long way toward meeting one of the most critical needs in the health status of the Nation. For a good many years the problems of the eye have been subsumed within the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Blindness and very good work has most assuredly been carried out. It is presently clear, however, that we have evolved far beyond the abilities of a joint institute to adequately serve the problems of blindness. Under the programs initiated by the NINDB great progress has been made in establishing first-rate departments of ophthalmology and affiliated research units around the country along with the development and training of personnel dedicated to research careers in vision. The time has now come to divorce the field of vision from its subsidiary role within an institute whose primary responsibilities and concerns have related to matters other than the eye and vision. To be sure, there are ties that bind ophthalmology and vision to the general field of neurological science and these ties must be maintained but the unique problems of the eye now require an administrative organization which can devote its efforts, undiluted, to the study and the implementation of programs of basic research and training centered on vision and blindness.

I predict a great increase in productivity of programs in vision under the aegis of a National Eye Institute. The disadvantages of isolation from the Institute of Neurology will be more than made up in the enhanced stress which will rightfully be placed upon visual problems. The introduction of this bill by Congressman ROONEY, in my judgment, is a merited and necessary evolutionary step in the maturation of a discipline which is more than able to stand on its own feet and which must achieve independence if the problems of blindness are ultimately to be resolved.

I, therefore, enthusiastically endorse your cosponsorship of this most important and progressive bill.

With very best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

GOODWIN M. BREININ, M.D.,
Professor and Chairman.

PITTSBURGH, PA., February 25, 1966.

Mr. HERBERT TENZER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR HERBERT: Sorry we did not have time to discuss proposal for National Eye Institute bill, H.R. 12373—as presented by FRED B. ROONEY, Democrat, of Pennsylvania, at our meeting of February 14. This proposal has been under consideration for about a year. At our SAC meeting last June, the members that I was able to speak to, were about equally divided on the subject.