I am editor in chief of the American Journal of Ophthalmology, an independent scientific journal with a circulation of 10,500 in the United States and abroad.

Currently, I am president of the Association of University Professors of Ophthalmology and chairman-elect of the Association for Research in Ophthalmology. Both of these organizations have unanimously endorsed legislation to provide a National Eye Institute within the National Institutes of Health.

I appear before you today to tell you why we believe the legislation authorizing a National Eye Institute should be approved.

In the past few years ophthalmologists and laboratory scientists concerned with the causes and cures of blinding disease had discussed what could be done to bring to bear the benefits of modern scientific technology on the prevention of blindness and on restoring vision in those who have already lost their sight.

We have considered the leadership, the creative concepts, and the methods which must be used to meet the expanding health requirements of our country. It is our belief that these problems are so great that they can be coped with only by an institute fully and exclusively devoted to vision research.

The development of a science proceeds through several stages, each dependent on what has gone before. Modern surgery was not possible until the development of anesthesia, followed shortly by the knowledge of antisepsis and the prevention of infection.

Modern atomic science depended significantly upon the demonstration of radioactive particles by the Curies and the demonstration of X-rays by Roentgen.

The study of visual disorders phase of research has reached a sophistication and maturity so that blindness is prevented and vision is salvaged for more individuals than every before.

A variety of studies now underway promise even greater rewards in the future.

In the past few years ophthalmologists have pioneered in the initial demonstration of the first effective treatment for virus diseases.

Through a miracle of ingenuity, technical and surgical skill, individuals blinded with dense scars at the front of the eye have been restored to nearly normal vision by means of ingenious plastic lenses substituted for the hopelessly scarred cornea.

Modern techniques of cataract surgery, or glaucoma operations, and retinal detachment surgery have preserved vision in individuals who would otherwise have been hopelessly blinded.

The study of the eye and its diseases has thus reached that auspicious moment when giant advances are possible both in treatment and the discovery of the causes of blinding eye disease provided there is adequate leadership and properly oriented research.

I have prefaced my remarks to emphasize that we are seeking approval of legislation establishing a National Eye Institute not because of a problem which is ill-defined and unstudied, with the steps necessary to solution unclear, but because ophthalmic scientists at this moment have the tools and the knowledge necessary to make a concerted effort upon the causes of blinding disease that will be of immediate benefit to the people of this country and all the world.