

[Telegram]

NEW YORK, N.Y., October 31, 1967.

HON. JOHN JARMAN, M.C.,
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Public Health and Welfare,
 House of Representatives, Washington, D.C.:*

As Founder and Executive Director of the Fight for Sight, National Council to Combat Blindness, Inc., founded in 1946 to stimulate and support ophthalmic research and as one of the original participants in the June, 1949 Congressional hearings which resulted in the establishment of the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Blindness, I urge the Committee's most sympathetic and positive action on the proposed new National Eye Institute.

My recommendation is based on a keen awareness of the pressing need for accelerated and increased support to research into the causes, treatments and cures of disabling eye diseases which take such enormous toll in human suffering and economic cost to our nation. As one who has lived without sight as a result of a blinding eye disease and through my professional experience in directing the distribution, since 1950, of more than Three Million Dollars for Eye Research I am convinced of the urgency for a National Eye Institute.

While the present Institute has contributed significantly to advancing eye research, the enormity of the problem demands a separate institute with primary concern and concentration on the problems which cause defective sight and blindness. I believe it is important to point out that when we deal with sight we are involved with multiple disorders, each of which requires specialized research investigation. A National Eye Institute would encompass a broad scope of diseases and disorders which affect and afflict millions in our nation.

We have every reason to feel encouraged by the progress that has been made despite limited facilities, manpower and funds and to be optimistic about the results that could be achieved through a National Eye Institute within the National Institutes of Health.

I would appreciate your making this message a part of the Official Record and, if possible, read before your Committee during the hearings.

MILDRED WEISENFELD,
*Founder and Executive Director, Fight for Sight, Inc., National Council to
 Combat Blindness, Inc.*

U.S. SENATE,
 COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE,
 Washington, D.C., October 31, 1967.

HON. JOHN JARMAN,
*Chairman, Subcommittee on Public Health and Welfare, House Committee on
 Interstate and Foreign Commerce, House of Representatives, Washington,
 D.C.*

DEAR CHAIRMAN JARMAN: I am writing to commend you for scheduling hearings on H.R. 12843, and related bills, to amend the Public Health Service Act to provide for the establishment of a National Eye Institute in the National Institutes of Health.

I am the sponsor of a bill in the Senate, (S. 392) to accomplish the same purpose. I have been trying to get hearings on my bill, and I am delighted to see the House begin consideration of this important subject.

I realize that one of the institutes already established at the National Institutes of Health—the Institute of Neurological Diseases and Blindness—is devoting part of its time and resources to research on diseases of the eye. However, blindness is such a scourge that it deserves an institute entirely devoted to searching out its causes and their cure. We need one great center in this country whose emphasis and scientific personnel are directed in only one channel—to the control of eye defects, eye diseases, and blindness.

I ask that this letter be made a part of the record of the hearings.

Sincerely,

FRANK E. MOSS,
U.S. Senator.