

Senator TYDINGS. We are delighted to welcome Mr. Holland.

Mr. HOLLAND. Thank you, sir.

Senator TYDINGS. He is from a very distinguished law firm.

Mr. McBRIER. And also accompanying me are several merchants from the Washington area. Our testimony is as follows.

I appreciate this opportunity to present the views¹ of the Metropolitan Washington Board of Trade regarding S. 316, S. 2589, and S. 2590.

The board of trade shares with proponents of these bills an earnest desire to protect National Capital consumers against unfair, fraudulent, or deceptive practices in the retail marketplace.

We join with Mayor Walter Washington and others who have expressed the need for comprehensive and effective consumer protection programs in our community. We agree with Mayor Washington regarding the need for unified community action in this important area of public concern.

It is the intention of the board of trade to support and work with the new city administration in its efforts to implement improved and expanded consumer protection and information programs in our National Capital community.

And we further concur with the chairman of this subcommittee, Senator Tydings, who said, upon introducing these bills, that their enactment is necessary—and I quote—“both to protect consumers and to safeguard the legitimate interests of reputable businessmen—who are the vast majority of merchants in this area.”

The Metropolitan Washington Board of Trade is no newcomer to the field of consumer interest protection. Our organization has long advocated and worked for unified action by all segments of our community in eliminating pernicious business practices that are injurious to consumer rights.

Toward this end, the board of trade, through its representatives on the drafting committee authorized by the former Board of Commissioners, participated in the formulation of S. 316, which was introduced by Senator Morse.

The board of trade believes that enactment of S. 316 will eliminate abuses in our community's retail marketplace, providing extensive protection to National Capital consumers without unduly restricting the normal business practices of ethical retail merchants.

The board of trade also endorses the broad objectives of S. 2589 and S. 2590, although with reservations regarding specific aspects of these proposals.

However, let me stress that such reservations stem from the belief that S. 2589 and S. 2590 can be made even more effective in carrying out the chairman's objective of protecting consumers and safeguarding the legitimate interests of reputable businessmen.

Our organization fully supports enactment of a law which will require a full and clear disclosure to purchasers of the essential terms and conditions of sales, including an adequate description of the merchandise, the price to be paid, the amount of all charges relating to the extension of credit, and a clear statement of consumer rights and obligations under the purchase agreement.

Upon introducing S. 2589, the subcommittee chairman expressed his intention to enact legislation for the District of Columbia requiring

¹ Supplemental statement subsequently received may be found on p. 298.