

would like to speak in opposition to the kill motion and in support of the bill. A couple of weeks ago a handout was circulated, I think all of the Senators saw a map of the State of Nebraska and the location of the ophthalmologists across the state and this leaves vast areas of the state that don't have an ophthalmologist readily available and I think it is of utmost importance that the optometrists of the state which fill in these very needed gaps, when they make eye examinations, have the best possible diagnostic means available to them with reasonable basis. And in other states where they have used the drops, they just have not had the problems of the scare tactics that have been provided to this Legislature. The bill provides the optometrists with simply the best tools of today to give a good examination of that eye so they can refer to an ophthalmologist a case where his care is needed and his treatment needed, so they won't be guessing. I don't understand the fear some of the ophthalmologists have of this bill other than if it is simply protectionism of ophthalmologists. It does not allow optometrists any vast increase in the area of treatment. It provides the best look into that eye possible for the optometrist and people that live fifty or a hundred or a hundred and fifty miles in this state from an ophthalmologist should have that immediate care or observation of that eye in the best possible manner by the optometrist. It doesn't make an M.D. out of an optometrist, as some have indicated. It simply gives him the best tools that are available to look into that eye and see whether that person needs to go to an ophthalmologist or not, because this is where a lot of referrals to ophthalmologists go, and I think it is unreasonable to expect, you have got many people out here one hundred miles from an ophthalmologist that may not get to that ophthalmologist if you don't have these tools available to the optometrist. When I first took an interest in this bill, I have a brother-in-law who is an optometrist in another state, in Ohio. I sent him a copy of the bill, and what he told me, he had used these drops for years in Ohio and thought it was a very simple tool to give to the optometrists to give the best possible look into that eye. I would urge you to oppose this kill motion and give the best eye care and diagnosis or look into that eye possible by the optometrists in the rural areas of this state. I sincerely hope you will defeat the kill motion and pass the bill. Thank you.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Simon and then Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SIMON: Mr. President, members of the body, I rise to support the Koch kill motion. In the debate on the floor