

March 4, 1982

LB 449

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Cullan.

SENATOR CULLAN: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, at this point in time I would oppose the Clark amendment. I think that it is...I don't know exactly whether Senator Clark's amendment is a good one or whether it is not at this point in time. However, I do know that the Public Health and Welfare Committee is looking at licensure in a whole number of areas this year and I think the real answer to the problem as far as opticians are concerned is that there isn't a licensure of opticians at all, and opticians should be regulated. They should have to demonstrate that they have some capabilities and some qualifications before they are allowed to simply set up their shops. And I don't believe that at this point in time we should amend LB 449 to take care of the problem. I think the approach would be to come in and establish licensure for opticians and establish the criterion standards at that point in time. The other point I would make is that there are individuals who do receive contact lenses whether it be under...from optometrists or ophthalmologists, may obtain the contacts from opticians but the primary eye care is still the ophthalmologist or the optometrist, and if there are any problems they would go back to those individuals and not back to the optician. So I guess I don't see the major health care issue that other peoples have seen here, but, secondly, if we are going to regulate opticians I think it should be through a licensure bill specifically regulating opticians and not as an amendment to LB 449. And so I would at this point in time urge you to reject the Clark amendment and we could handle this fight between the three Os or whatever we want to call it when we set up the standards for regulating opticians in the next session of the Legislature.

SPEAKER MARVEL: The Chair recognizes Senator Remmers.

SENATOR REMMERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, I support the amendment. In regard to the delaying for another year for a licensure bill, I think this is probably...the licensure bill is probably necessary but I think in the meanwhile we have no guarantee what will come out of the next session of the Legislature, whether that will happen next year or two or three years down the road. I think this is an area that needs to be tightened up. I think that consumers do not understand the technical problems involved in their contact lenses and that type of thing, and I believe that we would all agree that a qualified person should supervise this work, and I would encourage the adoption of the amendment.