Washington Times

Letter to the Editor (yourletters@washingtontimes.com)

RE: “Optometrists are the new Luddites” by Bruce Fein

In reading Mr. Fein’s piece “Optometrists are the new Luddites,” it appears he is using a new app to build his arguments, because they make as much sense and work as well as the technology he is trying to peddle. As a doctor of optometry, my primary concern is my patients’ eye health, which is put at risk from the inferior “care” delivered by clinically unproven online vision apps.

This is not a new narrative. Since for-profit companies began developing health care apps, they cried foul if they didn’t succeed, blaming the health care profession. But our job, and our promise, is to protect patient health, not promote untested snake oil remedies that put patients in harm’s way.

Anyone can do a Google search and find poignant examples of companies that put forth health claims which ultimately fell short — duping millions of patients in the process.

I, and my fellow doctors, use the latest in health technology every day and with today’s advancements, I am able to more accurately evaluate my patients’ eye and vision health. There is one common element in each piece of technology I use. Each one is evaluated, proven and approved by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to deliver accurate and meaningful results for patients.

None of the online vision “tests” that Mr. Fein mentions — or that exist — can make that same claim. And while they try to deflect criticism by attacking doctors for their patient care, their true value amounts to zero.

- Andrea P. Thau, O.D., President, American Optometric Association