

Name: Joshua Coates

Date: February 13, 2019

Subject: Oregon Association of Naturopathic Physicians Pay Parity Bill

Dear Senate and Health Care Committees,

My name is Joshua Coates and my husband is a Naturopathic Physician (ND). He has worked as a primary care provider for the past 8 years and in many cases has performed the same tasks as his PA, FNP, MD and DO colleagues in regard to patient care. Although his work is identical to theirs, he currently receives less compensation because of unequal insurance reimbursements. Here's why I believe that ND's are important to the State of Oregon and deserve equal reimbursements:

- Many of my friends and family seek remedies beyond those of western medicine and have benefited greatly from alternative care provided by ND's. Personally, when everything else failed, I was able to finally quit smoking because of the cessation plan provided to me by an ND.
- Naturopathic Physicians are capable and in many situations can provide the same patient care as other medical professionals - *did I mention that my husband has worked 8 years as a primary care provider in an immediate care setting?* I can't stress this enough. Same care but unequal pay due to insurance reimbursements.
- Patients should be able to choose who their doctors are and should have the option to choose an ND for care. I commend people who want to take control of their health. Many of my friends and family do this and also seek preventative care. ND's are great at this and with alternative medicines, can help keep people healthy.
- The Association of American Medical Colleges believes that there will be shortage of 120,000 physicians by the end of 2030.¹ This is a concerning statistic and if true, Oregon should work diligently to *insure that a shortage does not happen in our state*. Keeping NDs on board would help fill some of this void and encourage future ND's.
- Graduate school is expensive and a pay parity unfairly puts financial strain on ND families who have incurred medical school debt. Having less disposable income immediately impacts our local (state) economies in regard to major purchases like cars, homes, investments and local businesses - small to large.

I am asking that you vote YES on the Naturopathic Physician Pay Parity bill.

Sincerely,

Joshua Coates

joshua.coates@gmail.com

¹ https://news.aamc.org/press-releases/article/workforce_report_shortage_04112018/