

January 23, 2019

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To Whom It May Concern:

I am a naturopathic physician in Portland, Oregon. I run an integrative mental health clinic on NE Sandy Blvd. called Amenda Clinic. I moved to Oregon in 2000 to follow a dream to become a naturopathic physician, and have been proud to call this place my home ever since. I incurred \$100,000 in debt to complete my doctorate degree. I still have \$80,000 to go, even with a thriving medical practice and clinic, 16 years after graduation. I am proud to say that I currently mentor three naturopathic residents, and from what they've shared, they are graduating with \$250,000 to \$500,000 in debt. I can't imagine, given what we currently make as physicians, that they'll be likely to pay that off in their lifetimes.

It's stunning to me that our pay for identical services is not equitable to our medical colleagues; MDs, DOs, NPs, and PAs. Our education exceeds many of these professions. Even our clinical and credit hours while in school exceed those of an MD.

I run a clinic, and have almost had to close it once because of financial strain. I have seen colleagues who run clinics close their doors because of financial pressure. I even have some colleagues who have chosen other businesses after medical school – confectioners, hat-makers, tortilla-makers; and those are just my immediate classmates. We do this work for the love, not the money. But it's only fair that a physician's income should at least equal that of a high school teacher's, don't you think? Especially considering that our responsibility, education, and our debt, far exceed theirs.

In short, I am asking that you vote yes on the Naturopathic Physician Pay Parity bill. Thanks for reading this, and doing what you do.

Rob Nosse – if you're reading this – thanks for listening, and for being there for the naturopathic profession!

Sincerely,

Elissa Mendenhall, ND  
Director, Amenda Clinic  
Portland, Oregon