

Name: Brenda Peregrine of Beaverton, Oregon

Date: February 5, 2019

Subject: Oregon Association of Naturopathic Physicians Pay Parity Bill

Dear Senate and Health Care Committees,

My name is Brenda, and I am a patient of a Naturopathic Physician.

When my current ND shared that she makes less than PCPs in the state of Oregon, I was floored. And outraged. The quality and depth of care and compassion I've been shown by professionals in this position has vastly outstripped what I've received at traditional care providers, and **they should be compensated equally for their work and investment.**

I can't overstate the impact working with my current ND has had on my health. I have been managing a chronic, complex condition since I was 14 years old, and because of the nature of my condition, it often impacts every facet of my life.

Until I discovered naturopathic care, the only conventional treatment for my condition was birth control pills. I was put on birth control when I was 14 and was on pills for nearly 17 years before I began to question why my body needed to be constantly medicated in order to function.

Asking this question of traditional PCPs got me everything from strange looks to threatening responses. One PCP (who practices in the state of OR) told me "If you go off birth control, you're virtually guaranteeing that you're going to end up with cancer." Awesome.

Something I was unaware of until I started seeing an ND is the fact that my condition often goes hand in hand with insulin resistance. Although I had been receiving treatment for this issue for nearly 20 years, not one provider in the traditional healthcare system thought to mention this to me or screen me for this issue, although all of them told me to "lose weight and walk more." Even when I was regularly running 5ks.

It could be that they didn't care. I can't say. But it's more likely that they didn't have or make time.

Rather than a 15-minute churn, each ND I've seen in the state of Oregon has patiently listened to me, deeply understood my situation, and worked with me to explore not only what was happening, but why, and then helped me come up with a joint strategy to address it. Sometimes that strategy was alternative—acupuncture or supplements instead of pharmaceuticals—but just as often, we've chosen the traditional approach, but with vastly more context than I've received in traditional medical settings.

The sensitivity, depth, and breadth of their care has been one of the most integral facets to my wellbeing over the last five years I've lived here.

My current ND listens to me. She takes what I say seriously. She considers the options and explains what she knows to help me understand my own body. She's sensitive to my feelings, and she willingly interfaces with the other providers who are supporting my mental, physical, and spiritual wellbeing as a human.

It's an absolute travesty that we make these healthcare providers choose between what's best for their patients and their ability to pay their own bills.

We need to be better than this. For me, for other patients like me, and for anyone who chooses to seek alternatives to the traditional approach to Western medicine.

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

Sincerely,

Brenda Peregrine