

Jenna Hamza
Feb 9, 2019

Subject: Oregon Association of Naturopathic Physicians Pay Parity Bill

Dear Senate and Health Care Committees,

My name is Jenna Hamza and I am a naturopathic medical student. I would like to share my experience as a student to show the importance of this profession in the delivery of quality healthcare in the state of Oregon, and the barriers that we face in trying to deliver this care.

- I decided to attend naturopathic medical school because I believe in a patient-centered, preventative approach to health care.
- Our education is a 4-year doctorate that looks quite similar to that of MDs. We have far more training than our nurse practitioner and physician's assistant colleagues and yet are reimbursed less than these providers for the exact same level of service.
- NDs are seen as peers and partners in healthcare delivery and we offer expertise to patients in integrative, holistic and preventative approaches to their health, training that MDs do not get in their medical school curriculum.
- Reimbursement rates are currently 60% of what our MD counterparts receive, which significantly impacts our ability to pay back student loans, which are often equivalent to those which medical doctors accrue during their education.
- Reimbursement issues inevitably impact our patients because we are not able to spend adequate time with them if we are constantly worried about getting paid enough. This has a negative overall impact on quality of care
- I strongly desire to serve my community and give back. Equal reimbursement would free up my time so that I can volunteer more of it and contribute to a healthier community.

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

Sincerely,

Jenna Hamza