



Wednesday, February 10, 2021

Dear Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education;

My name is Emma Neiworth Petshow, ND, CPT. I live in Clackamas county and I practice naturopathic medicine in Multnomah county at Powell Valley Wellness in Gresham, Oregon as well as the National University of Natural Medicine in downtown Portland, OR. I have been licensed by the state of Oregon since 2018 and I serve on the Oregon Board of Naturopathic Medicine as an executive committee member. During this past year, a lot of my time has been spent testing patient's for COVID-19, treating patients who test positive on an outpatient basis, and creating processes to become a COVID-19 vaccine provider to help continue to fight the pandemic in Oregon.

As my profession continues to struggle for equitable treatment from health insurers and other barriers for proper inclusion with the rest of the primary care provider types, now is not the time bury us under multiple layers of management inside the Oregon Health Authority. The amount of time and effort required to pull that transition off looks to me to be enormous. My profession cannot help but perceive risk from this move given the history of what the profession has had to endure since the first license was issued in 1927.

The Oregon Board of Naturopathic Medicine (OBNM) is an independent licensing board in the state of Oregon, which is the same as other primary care provider types including MDs, DOs, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners.

Although I recognize the need for budgetary adjustments from the state, the small financial gains created from this consolidation cannot compare to the risks and uncertainties of removing our licensing board from the same status and management level as other primary care providers in the state. In fact, doing so could cause severe disruption to the normal oversight of our profession similar to other medical boards in the state of Oregon.

My colleagues and I would prefer to increase our annual licensure fees to continue to have our regulatory board be financially solvent and not a burden on the state of Oregon budget. We would like to avoid continued unequal treatment and suppression of patient choice in healthcare especially during this sensitive time when we need more providers practicing primary care than ever. Treatment of our board, OBNM, differently than other primary care provider types in the state of Oregon could be hazardous to the profession and would likely require more resources by the OHA that they do not need to expend at this time.

Help us to continue to be a real and viable choice for how Oregonians pursue their healthcare.

Sincerely,

Emma Neiworth Petshow, ND, CPT