

Dear Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education;

My name is Tyler Keliheleua, ND. I live and practice naturopathic medicine in Washington County, within walking distance of my home in Progress Ridge Beaverton. I have been licensed by the state of Oregon and practicing full-time since 2008, the year I graduate from medical school.

As my profession continues to struggle for equitable treatment from health insurers and other barriers for proper inclusion with the rest of the state's primary care provider types, now is not the time to be burying us under multiple layers of management inside the Oregon Health Authority.

The amount of time and effort required to pull off such a transition looks to me to be enormous and unnecessary. Further, I can't help but perceive risk from this move given the history of what my profession has had to endure all these years since the first ND license was issued.

The state is looking for some small financial efficiency from this consolidation. Whatever that amount is cannot compare to the risks and uncertainties from pushing our licensing board down under that many layers of management.

I would rather pay higher licensing fees in order to keep our licensing board independent and without further supervision and I know many of my colleagues feel the same way. Supervision by unnecessary and potentially hazardous layers of management that likely will know very little about what makes naturopathic medicine special. And why we are important to maintain as a real and viable choice for how Oregonians choose to pursue their healthcare.

Sincerely,

Tyler Keliheleua, ND