

Dear Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education;

My name is Sara Love, ND. I live in Multnomah County, and I practice naturopathic medicine in Multnomah County. I've been licensed by the state of Oregon since 2010.

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

Throughout the pandemic, the Oregon Board of Naturopathic Medicine (OBNM) has been responsive to all our questions, concerns, and ensured that we understand how we can safely practice medicine during COVID. The OBNM provided us with excellent information on how we could get vaccinated since most NDs do not work for health systems. In my primary practice location, I work alongside colleagues whose Board is under the Health Licensing Office (HLO). They were not given much of this information, had many questions for me and struggled to stay up-to-date on all the guidance, and were not informed on how to get vaccinated against COVID.

I appreciate that the state is looking for some small financial efficiency from this consolidation. However, any board consolidation should evaluate consolidating boards of similar scopes of practice. Adding NDs to a group of professions that are completely different from ours will only increase the potential for harm to Oregonians. Whatever the amount of money saved, it cannot compare to the risks and uncertainties from pushing our licensing board down under that many layers of management.

Me and the rest of my colleagues would rather pay higher licensing fees in order to keep our licensing board independent staffed with individuals who are responsive to our needs and work to promote the health and safety of Oregonians.

Sincerely,

Sara Love, ND  
doubletrack naturopathic  
Portland, OR