

January 30, 2022

Re: YES ON HB 4006, Simply time for Fair Pay.

Dear House Health Care Committee,

My name is Margaret Burkes and I am a Naturopathic Doctor (ND). I would like to share my experience working in Oregon as a licensed ND and ask you to please support HB 4006.

I love helping people. This is why I have sacrificed years to medical school to become a licensed physician and practice medicine in my local community. I love connecting with people whatever perspective they are coming from, and helping them both understand their medical condition and successfully implement a plan to move their health forward. Just like any other provider on the health care team.

I often manage the majority of the healthcare needs for my patients, whether it be their annual physical, lab orders, health screenings or prescription(s). I also make referrals to other competent providers and specialists when appropriate. In addition, I teach my patients about diet and nutrition, how to stay active, manage stress, improve their sleep and become more proactive in their own healthcare. All of these things come together to create a more complete long-term care plan that ultimately results in cost-savings.

Unfortunately, NDs are not being fairly compensated for our valuable contributions to healthcare. This makes it more difficult for people like me to stay in practice and deliver this essential, desired and unique level of care. The state is allowing private insurance companies to limit access to healthcare for patients and their families in the community.

For those of us who have been able to choose to stay in the plans, we do so at a great economic disadvantage to our peers, making it difficult to repay student loans, support staff and their families and give back to the community. One option is moving to an all-cash model that not everybody can afford, the other option is to finally pass HB 4006.

Sincerely yours,

*Margaret Burkes, ND*