



Heart Spring Health

Guiding individuals, families, and communities towards radiant health

January 28, 2022

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

Dear House Health Care Committee,

My name is Dr. Serron Wilkie 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 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. *Making it difficult to keep trained healthcare staff such as medical assistants, phlebotomists, and billers. I recently had a staff member ask me for a \$6/hr raise after only working for me for 3 months because “she could find another job that paid this much very easily right now” I looked, it was true, the going rate on indeed had gone up from \$16/hr just last year to \$24/hr in January 2022. My staff works harder and is paid less than other medical offices but they do it because they believe in what we offer patients. Unfortunately, though it is not uncommon for the staff that we have spent hours upon hours training to move on eventually to a larger medical facility that can pay them better as their family’s needs outweigh their own for financial security.* 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,

Serron Wilkie ND LAc