

From the desk of
Dr. Blake Langley, ND, MS, LAc
Postdoctoral Fellow

February 2, 2022

Re: YES ON HB 4006, Time for Fair Pay to Naturopathic Doctors

Dear House Health Care Committee,

My name is Blake Langley, and I am a Naturopathic Doctor (ND) and Licensed Acupuncturist (LAc). I would like to share my experience working in Oregon as a licensed ND and ask you to please support HB 4006.

I work as a clinical researcher to improve patient outcomes, reduce healthcare costs overall, and to promote wellness in the communities within and that extend beyond the State of Oregon. I came into this medicine to help people and I sacrificed years and a significant amount of money to medical school to become a licensed physician and practice medicine in my local community. However, as I moved beyond graduation into potential clinical practice, I realized this may not be a tenable option due to income restrictions associated with my credentials regardless of my training as a primary care provider.

I interface with many colleagues who experience these issues daily. NDs work in primary care settings to coordinate medication management, prevent the development of chronic disease, and take care to prevent overburdening the already-challenged emergency departments, especially considering current circumstances. In these practice settings, NDs regularly are not being fairly compensated for their valuable contributions to healthcare when working with insurance companies.

Not only does this makes it more difficult for NDs to stay in practice and deliver this essential, desired, and unique level of care, but it negatively impacts the patients who receive care from ND providers. The State of Oregon is currently allowing private insurance companies to limit compensation for physicians, thereby limiting access to healthcare for patients and their families in the community. It is imperative that we ensure the healthcare workforce is adequately compensated to remain in practice and care for our constituents.

For those of who have been able to choose to stay in the plans, they do so at a great economic disadvantage to their 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 reduces access to care for those who are underprivileged. The other option is to stand with Oregon residents and healthcare providers and pass HB 4006.

In light and health,

Blake O. Langley, ND, MS, LAc

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