

February 1, 2022

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

Dear House Health Care Committee,

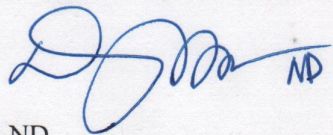
My name is Daivati Bharadvaj and I am a Naturopathic Doctor (ND). I would like to share my experience working in Oregon as a licensed ND and ask you to please support HB 4006.

I am proud and delighted to be working in a successful medical practice since 2005, offering naturopathic primary care medicine to a large community. My patients come from diverse ethnic, racial, and language backgrounds. As an immigrant and woman of color, I especially love connecting with people from different perspectives to support their empowerment in their health and wellness.

As a family doctor, I take responsibility in managing the majority of the healthcare needs for my patients, such as annual preventive physicals, lab orders, health screenings or prescription(s). I 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. Together we collaborate to create a more complete long-term care plan that ultimately results in cost-savings and improved health outcomes to patients. This collaboration and focus on the whole person requires more time and effort, but it pays off in the very inspiring and impressive improvements my patients make from very sick to thriving.

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. I struggle with balancing comprehensive patient care with the poor reimbursement rates that limit my ability to stay in practice and hire staff who could support me. While my practice is thriving in terms of patient load, I am financially strained as a provider. This is all the more impactful since the pandemic: the demand for healthcare is at its highest. I am trying to provide care to as many as I can while maintaining my employees, avoiding burnout, and still making ends meet. The state is allowing private insurance companies to limit access to healthcare for patients and their families in the community, and this is simply unfair and unhealthy for everyone. For those of us who have been able to choose to stay in the plans, we do so at a great economic disadvantage to ourselves and our peers, making it difficult to repay student loans, support staff, and give back to the community. **It is time to finally pass HB 4006 and offer pay parity for naturopathic physicians. Thank you for voting YES!**

Sincerely,

 ND 02/01/2022

Daivati Bharadvaj, ND