

**Message Subject: SUPPORT ND Pay Parity**

**02/03/2022**

Re: **HB 4008**, Support Access to Primary & Preventative Care

Dear House Health Care Committee,

We are naturopathic medical students at the National University of Natural Medicine (NUNM) in Portland, OR. **We are writing to share our experience as future naturopathic doctors and ask you to please support HB 4008.**

As naturopathic medical students, we are trained in a four-year, accredited medical program as a primary care physician with a focus on preventative services and chronic disease management. Naturopathic medical schools, like NUNM, are accredited by an agency recognized by the U.S. Department of Education. These programs require students to fulfill a minimum of 1,200 hours of clinical training and clerkship before graduating with a Doctor of Naturopathy degree, comparable to that of medical doctors. To practice naturopathic medicine, naturopathic doctors (NDs) must pass a professional competency exam, meet annual continuing education requirements, and uphold standards as required by licensing agencies such as the Oregon Board of Naturopathic Medicine.

HB 4008 addresses the disparity in pay for naturopathic physicians. This pay parity bill for NDs will help increase patient access to care in rural and underserved communities, protect patient choice for all Oregonians, support culturally appropriate healthcare, sustain 1,088 doctors already trained and licensed, and resolve long-standing healthcare inequality. **We believe Pay Parity is important in increasing access to care for more people to work toward health, to reduce healthcare spending, and promote financial equity.**

NDs are uniquely positioned to address public health crises through the emphasis on patient education and disease prevention. As there is a shortage of doctors in Oregon, our training and expertise could help alleviate some of the burdens on the healthcare system. NDs are able to manage the majority of routine, primary healthcare needs whether it be annual physicals, lab orders, health screenings or prescriptions. They also refer and work in partnership with other competent providers and specialists when appropriate. In addition, they educate patients about healthy lifestyle practices such as: diet and nutrition, physical activity, stress management, sleep hygiene, and becoming more proactive in their own wellness. All of these facets come together to create complete treatment plans focused on prevention and whole-person healthcare.

Unfortunately, right now in Oregon, NDs are not fairly compensated for their valuable contributions to healthcare. This makes it more difficult for Oregonians to access this unique and essential system of healthcare and support Oregon NDs in serving as primary care providers. These issues could be concurrently addressed through pay parity, the focus of HB 4008

We are asking you to vote yes on **HB 4008** and support fair pay for Naturopathic Doctors.

Sincerely yours,

96 Naturopathic Medical Students:

Hanna Preston Powers

Mallory Rose

Hannah Ruisi

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Christina Norcross

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Andrew Conway

Haley Duffy

Jennifer Trigg

Jacqueline Craft

Monica Kendall

Natalie Amadeo

Ashley J Long

Madeleine Parmenter

Sophia Victoria Kwin

Tia Meechan

Rachael Null

Patricia Filbin

Danielle

Martha Pace

Ariel Weiner

Jennifer Novak

Gail Robison

Rebecca Lyn Moragne

Elle Marie Lee

Jordan E Means

Derek Leiss

Adam vaughn

Sumner Van Brunt

Shelane Oglesby

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Kendall Zewald

Miquella Young

Kiara Cordes

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Eric Martinez

Alexandra Quinn

Ryan Wexler

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McKinzie Boyer

Malgorzata Ptak

Srikanth Kalluri

Miles French

Rylie Dean

Amelia R Cohn

Kailee Phillips

Lydia Norby-Adams

Ryan Hofer

Melissa Sharee Barber

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Rachel Leber

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Carson Pickett

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