

Support HB2555 I am begging you

External

HB2555



Luz Liliana Devalier-Vázquez
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to me

Dear House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee,

My name is Luz Liliana Devalier y Vázquez, and I am a patient of multiple licensed naturopathic doctors (ND). I would like to share my experience working with my doctor, and ask you to support HB2555.

I am a high-maintenance patient: I am severely and multiply disabled, and struggle with daily chronic pain and difficulty functioning from a wide range of bodily systems. Because of the interactions of these disabilities, the care that I require is highly specialized and requires a holistic approach. This means that naturopathic care is uniquely valuable to me and in fact several times more effective than any traditional MD I have ever seen. The clinical expertise and unique training that my ND doctors offer, coupled with the dedicated time and attention given to all my concerns, makes them irreplaceable to me.

My NDs manage the majority of my healthcare needs, whether it be my annual wellness visits, necessary lab and imaging tests, preventive screening exams or vital prescriptions. They also refer me to medical specialists as needed, working in partnership with other providers to offer a truly integrative approach to my healthcare.

My NDs take the time to teach me about my health and how to best manage my concerns through diet and nutrition, staying active in ways that are compatible with my rheumatological issues, overcoming stress from PTSD and multiple severe mental illnesses, and helping me sleep (as I suffer from PTSD-induced nightmares, every night), in addition to prescribing medications or alternative treatments. This is the best type of preventive medicine and has saved me from worse illness or more expensive treatments down the line, as well as providing medical answers to solutions where traditional Western medicine simply fails.

As an example of the above: I take White Willow Bark (*salix alba*) to manage my severe chronic pain. I have found it to be dramatically more effective than traditional painkillers such as naproxen sodium, Tylenol, and Acetaminophen. Additionally, white willow does not cause the irritation of the gastric lining found with western NSAIDs, which means I can take it with a much higher degree of frequency, allowing me to actually keep pace with my chronic pain in a way that standard pharmaceutical painkillers simply cannot measure up to. This is one out of a dozen examples that impact my daily functioning, health, and well-being.

Unfortunately, naturopathic doctors in Oregon are not being fairly compensated for the care they give me and for the important role they play in our state's healthcare workforce. Naturopathic doctors are paid about half of what all the other provider types (MDs, DOs, NPs and PAs) are paid for the same exact billing code and same service provided. This discrepancy puts my doctor on unstable financial ground and puts my access to my provider of choice in jeopardy. Naturopathic doctors are being forced to drop insurance plans to remain financially viable.

It is essential that I be able to utilize my health insurance to see my doctor. I cannot afford to both purchase health insurance and pay out of pocket for my regular and preventive care. It's not only unfair, it's unrealistic. I need my ND to stay in network with my insurance and to stay in business!

I am asking you to please vote yes on HB2555 and ensure access to licensed naturopathic doctors.

Sincerely,
Luz Liliána Caracól Devalier y Vázquez
Portland