

Dear House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee,

My name is Maureen O'Hagan I am a patient of a licensed naturopathic doctor (ND). I would like to share my experience working with my doctor, and ask you to support HB2555.

I've seen my ND for all sorts of things: rashes, allergies, colds, regular checkups gynecological exams, and physical ailments like sciatica and shoulder, wrist and back pain. Although I value many different types of medical providers, I have to say she's given me more relief from the physical pain than any other provider. Not only that, she's given me more time to discuss my health concerns than any MD I've ever seen. As a woman in my 50s, I'm grateful for her experience and expertise—and I'm also healthier than many other 50somethings I know.

My ND takes the time to teach me about my health and how to best manage my concerns through diet and nutrition, staying active, overcoming stress, and improving my sleep, 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.

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,

Maureen O'Hagan  
Portland OR