

Dear House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee,

My name is Eshe Boyette. I am a patient of a licensed naturopathic doctor (ND) Michael Mckee. I would like to share my experience working with my doctor, and ask you to support HB2555.

Though there are many diverse and valuable types of medical providers, the provider that I, above all, value for my regular care is my ND. The clinical expertise and unique training that my doctor offers, coupled with the dedicated time and attention given to all my concerns, makes him/her/them irreplaceable to me. I trust no-one more with my health than my ND. He is irreplaceable.

My ND manages the majority of my healthcare needs, whether it be my annual wellness visits, necessary lab and imaging tests, preventive screening exams or vital prescriptions. I would feel very nervous about putting my health in the hands of a medical doctor who cares more about health politics than the health of their patients.

My doctor literally saved my life while other medical professionals and specialists told me that everything going on was in my head. I have medical trauma from the lack of competency in MDs and do not have to worry about this issue when working with my ND or other NDs I have seen. I'm almost better off not seeing a doctor at all if I don't have access to my ND.

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.**

I cannot afford to purchase both health insurance and pay out of pocket for my regular and preventive care. In fact, I have chosen to forgo health insurance so that I can afford to continue my care with Dr. Mckee, because my life depends on it. What a shame it is to be in this position where health politics are putting me at risk. NDs should be adequately compensated and insurance companies need to make working with NDs as affordable as medical doctors.

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

Sincerely,

Eshe Boyette
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