

2/20/2023

Re: HB 2555, Vote YES to Support Fair Pay for NDs

Dear House Health Care Committee,

My name is Dr. Erin Fix 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 2555.

I work in Canby and Salem as a primary care provider. This includes managing healthcare needs such as wellness exams, lab orders, cancer screenings and prescriptions. I make referrals to other providers and specialists when appropriate, working as an integral part of my patient's healthcare team. In addition, I educate my patients on nutrition, exercise, stress management and sleep quality, empowering them to be proactive in their health. This unique approach helps to prevent illness and reduce the need for pharmaceutical, surgical and hospital management. In this time of rising healthcare costs and growing provider shortages, naturopathic doctors help to fill a need, not only in our patients' lives, but as a part of the state's healthcare system and workforce.

Unfortunately, NDs are not being fairly compensated for our valuable contributions to healthcare. This appalling reimbursement discrepancy by insurance companies makes it very difficult for doctors like me to stay in practice and deliver this essential, desired and unique level of care.

As doctors close their doors, not only are jobs lost, but patients lose their doctor and access to their preferred provider type. The disturbing outcome of this injustice is that private insurance companies are limiting our communities' access to healthcare, and the state is allowing it.

Too many of our patients pay out of pocket to receive care at our clinic despite having health insurance--this needs to change! By ensuring pay equality for naturopathic doctors, we can expand patient access to care in our communities and ensure patients have the right to choose their doctor.

We are here - licensed primary care doctors, working hard to serve our patients and communities. Please help us to survive and continue to do so by finally passing HB 2555.

Sincerely,
Dr. Erin Fix
Nurture Health Clinic
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Salem, OR 97302