

2.16.2023

Re: HB 2555, Vote YES to Support Naturopathic Doctors (NDs)

Dear House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee,

My name is Dr. Kathlynn Northrup-Snyder and I am a Clinical Nurse Specialist and I would like to share my experience working in Oregon with licensed Naturopathic Doctors and ask you to please support HB 2555.

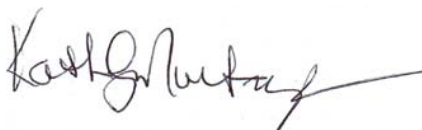
I have had the opportunity to work closely with Naturopathic Doctors as a patient and healthcare worker through my clients' experiences. Most people are moving toward alternative care as they see improvements with new techniques where before they had been "stuck" in their wellness journey. Many providers have shifted to or added an ND or other alternative license to their practice for the same reason. They also note a frustration with the limitations of the westernized medical approaches and have shifted fully to an ND practice to optimize the care they can provide. Research on alternative medicine approaches have been authorized since 1997 through the National Institute of Medicine (now OAM) under the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine (NCCAM).

I appreciate the unique and valuable skill set and approach to care that NDs offer. I have found NDs to be professional, knowledgeable, competent, and well-trained clinically. I recognize the great importance of NDs in their role as primary care providers to prevent illness and help reduce the need for pharmaceutical, surgical and hospital management with not only saves lives **it also saves thousands of dollars for acute care**. Their unique education equips them well in this role and enables them to offer treatment alternatives that patients truly desire. They are thus a valuable part of a healthcare team and the state's workforce in general.

Unfortunately, NDs are not being fairly compensated for their valuable contributions to healthcare in Oregon. This makes it difficult for NDs to stay in network with insurance companies, and even to remain in practice for their patients. Additionally, it makes it untenable for most clinics and hospitals to hire NDs as employees even during a time of healthcare provider shortages.

Since the research and clients indicate strong support for alternative practice, including NDs, and since there is an extreme shortage of General Practitioners and Nurse Practitioners, it no longer makes sense to limit ND practice through reimbursement channels or reduced legitimacy of their practice. Let's provide diverse health care to anyone in the US and especially here in Oregon to increase wellness for all. NDs should be compensated fairly for the care they are able to deliver to the people of Oregon. I am asking you to vote yes on HB 2555 and support fair pay for Naturopathic Doctors.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Kathlynn Northrup-Snyder', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kathlynn Northrup-Snyder PhD, CNS, MSN, RN, BSN