

Submitter: Meghan Larivee

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2555

Thank you for your service to Oregonians and your hard work on behalf of improving access to healthcare and fair payment/ insurance reimbursement to Naturopathic Physicians. I am honored to practice Naturopathic Medicine and to serve Oregonians in this capacity. I would not trade my education or career path for anything else. As you well know we are in a crisis of shortage of medical providers across this state. The continued propagation of pay discrimination because of political turf wars ultimately impacts negatively our very own community members. More and more students are choosing not to pursue naturopathic medicine due to the reality of poor financial returns relative to the cost of the education. Yes, this is a choice on part of the doctor pursuing such field of study, but when we are experiencing a severe shortage of primary care providers it makes sense to pay all those who practice within the scope of their license to be reimbursed fairly and in line with their allied healthcare providers. Yes, an argument that I hear is that NDs are not required to do residency training, however it is also true that both NP (nurse practitioners) and PA's (physician assistants) do not participate in residency training, YET they are reimbursed at pay parity. Furthermore, the loop hole in this dilemma is that all ND residencies are privately funded whereas MD residencies are funded by federal medicare dollars. Because NDs are not recognized as physicians in all states across the country, they do not have access to the federal dollars to fund residencies. With that said, most graduating NDs who are competitive applicants have the opportunity to match to a residency training program. Thank you again for your support of this bill and thank you for your efforts to end this pay discrimination.

Sincerely, Meghan Larivee