

SUNSHINE FAMILY HEALTHCARE

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February 6, 2023

Dear House Behavioral Health Care Committee,

My name is Vivian Chappell 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.

Though there are not 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 her irreplaceable to me.

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. They also refer me to medical specialists as needed, working in partnership with other providers to offer a truly integrative approach to my healthcare.

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,



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

Dear House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee,

My name is Regina Flanagan 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 love helping people. It's for this reason that I have sacrificed years of my life to, and invested hugely in, medical school and establishing a practice in my local community. Each day I use every tool at my disposal to help my patients feel better and to prevent chronic disease. My education and training enable me to offer both standard-of-care treatments and gentle alternatives, offering care that my patients greatly desire.

As a primary care provider, I am licensed to manage the majority of the healthcare needs for my patients, including 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. Loan payments and the cost of running a medical clinic are great. It's proving unsustainable to practice in this state with such poor pay. 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.

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,



Regina Flanagan, ND