

Dear House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee,

My name is Mistique Vigeo. I am a patient of a licensed naturopathic doctor (ND), as well as a provider who benefits from ND services. I would like to share my experience working with my doctor, and ask you to support HB2555.

I have seen many medical providers over my lifetime, and the services that I have gotten from my NDs have been by far the most beneficial in improving my health. I, above all, value my ND for my regular care. The clinical expertise and additional naturopathic training that my doctor offers, coupled with the dedicated time and attention - which is above and beyond any other provider - makes her irreplaceable to me.

My ND manages the majority of my healthcare needs including my annual wellness visits, lab work, preventive screening exams, client education, and prescriptions. She also refers me to medical specialists when necessary, 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 nutrition, sleep hygiene, exercise, overcoming stress, and prescribing nutraceuticals or other alternative treatments. This is the best type of preventive medicine and has saved me from worse illnesses or more expensive treatments down the line.

Naturopathic doctors in Oregon are not being fairly compensated for the care they give me and for the critical 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 the same service provided. **This discrepancy puts my doctor on unstable financial ground and jeopardizes my access to my provider of choice. 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 also 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,

Mistique Vigeo
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