

Name: Elizabeth Kaltman, ND, MPH

Date: 02/13/2019

Subject: Oregon Association of Naturopathic Physicians Pay Parity Bill

Dear Senate and Health Care Committees,

My name is Elizabeth Kaltman and I am a Naturopathic Physician. I would like to share my experience working as an ND to show the importance of this profession in the delivery of quality healthcare in the state of Oregon, and the barriers that we face in trying to deliver this care.

Since graduation from NCNM in 2010, I have worked almost exclusively providing primary care and reproductive health services to underserved Oregonians. I have worked for all of the following local institutions, many of which are part of Oregon's Safety Net.

Trillium Family Services
Morrison Child and Family Services
Planned Parenthood Columbia Willamette Valley
Youth Villages
ZOOM+Care

For the last five years, I have provided all of the primary care services to children and adolescents in residential psychiatric treatment at Trillium Family Service's Parry Center in southeast Portland. One of my roles here is to offer access to contraception for at-risk youth in order to help prevent teen pregnancy.

I also serve on the gynecology team at ZOOM+Care where in 2017 I received a 25% reduction in my salary due to insurance company's failure to compensate equivalently for ND services. Clinically, I work alongside of MDs, NPs, and PAs providing identical services to these clinicians.

Additionally, I serve as a Clinical Trainer for both Merck and Upstream USA. In this role I train MDs, NPs, and PAs in the minor surgery procedures for inserting and removing IUDs and contraceptive implants. Yet insurance reimbursement rates for my clinical services are consistently less than my MD, NP, and PA peers, and sometimes claims are completely denied based on my degree.

This not only impacts my personal ability to obtain gainful employment, but it drastically impacts access to care for Oregon's most vulnerable citizens. We have a shortage of primary care providers in Oregon and NDs are ready to step in and help

fill that gap. But we can only do so when employers are confident that our services will be reimbursed equivalently by insurance companies.

I am asking that you vote yes on the Naturopathic Physician Pay Parity bill. This bill will allow underserved Oregonians increased access to primary care clinicians and as such help to build Oregon's Safety Net.

Thank you for considering this essential legislation.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth Kaltman, ND, MPH