

Name: Rachel Neuendorf, ND

Date: February 11, 2019

Subject: Oregon Association of Naturopathic Physicians Pay Parity Bill

Dear Senate and Health Care Committees,

My name is Rachel Neuendorf and I am a Naturopathic Physician. I would like to share my experience working with 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.

I graduated with my doctorate from National University of Natural Medicine and then completed a three year residency working in primary care. My education and experience has allowed me to provide a wide range of care for patients from preventive care (wellness exams, dietary advice, vaccine administration, screening laboratory testing and imaging), acute illness visits, and management of chronic conditions (diabetes, hypertension, obesity). One of the benefits of my training and experience is that I can offer patients treatment options including dietary advice, botanical medicine, physical medicine and pharmaceutical care.

I currently work in an integrative medical practice where I work with other medical providers (physician assistants (PA), nurse practitioners (NP), osteopathic doctor (DO)) to provide primary care to all ages. As part of my practice, I am currently serving the low income population and seeing all Medicaid patients. Due to the pay parity differences between NDs and other providers in our clinic (NP, PA, DO), my clinic management has chosen to not have me see patients with private insurance. Unfortunately, this pay difference has led to limited options for myself and other naturopathic physicians. Despite the fact there is a need for more primary care providers, there is a hesitation among clinics to hire NDs as the pay reimbursement for the same visit type is not equivalent to other providers.

After working in an integrative, conventionally run primary care clinic, I am confident in saying that the care I provide to patients deserves to be reimbursed equivalent to other providers. My patient's comment on how they appreciate the time I spend with them as well as the holistic approach I provide. Unfortunately, in my practice when patient's transition from Medicaid to private insurance they are no longer able to continue care with me due to the poor reimbursement rates. I have many patients express their disappointment in not being able to continue with the naturopathic approach.

I am asking that you vote yes on the Naturopathic Physician Pay Parity bill.

Sincerely,

Rachel Neuendorf, ND