

Re: SB772, Support Fair Pay for Naturopathic Doctors (NDs)

Dear Senate Health Care Committee,

My Primary Care Physician is a Naturopathic Doctor (ND). **Your support of SB772 will help make sure I get the best quality care and address my many health issues most effectively.** My diagnoses include heart failure, restless leg syndrome, chronic fatigue, asthma, allergies, and a broad range of food intolerances. As you might imagine, I have worked with many types of medical providers, and none have taken the time and shown the care in my health and welfare like my naturopathic physician. The level of education, support and competent care that I have received has not only helped me move forward with my health conditions, but has renewed my faith in the healthcare system. As a naturopath, she sees the whole system and can treat using both pharmaceuticals where they make sense and natural foods, supplements, and exercise where they make sense.

My entire family also has NDs as PCPs. As another example of the benefits, my daughter has celiac disease, but no MD identified it. It was an ND who had the perspective to quickly identify the issue. It is now very well managed, thanks to that ND.

Unfortunately, right now in Oregon NDs are not being fairly compensated for their essential contributions to healthcare. This makes it more difficult for people like me to access this unique and truly transformative level of care. It also limits my choices when it comes to healthcare.

My ND manages the majority of my healthcare needs whether it be my annual physical, lab orders, health screenings or prescription(s). They also refer me to other competent providers and specialists when appropriate. In addition, they teach me about diet and nutrition, how to stay active, manage stress, improve my sleep and become more proactive in my own healthcare. All of these things come together to create a more complete treatment plan for my health and I am making real progress on my health challenges after years of standard MDs being unable to help.

With systemic diseases like diabetes running rampant, the health of our state needs the perspective that NDs can bring to Oregon residents throughout the state. By ensuring they are fairly compensated, this bill can help many Oregonians enjoy a healthier (and probably longer) life.

Please vote yes on SB772 and support fair pay for Naturopathic Doctors.

Thank you in advance for your support on this critical issue,

Alan Lehto
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