

April 2, 2021

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

Dear Senate Health Care Committee,

I am a Naturopathic Doctor (ND) in my first year of residency working as a primary care provider in Portland and Salem. There are many hard-working NDs filling the shortage of primary care providers in Oregon, and collectively we are asking for your help in getting fair pay from health insurers.

HB2902 passed in 2013 “requiring insurers to reimburse physician assistants and nurse practitioners in independent practices at the same rate as physicians for the same services.” It is past time that Naturopathic Doctors be included in receiving “the same rate for the same service.”

Unfair reimbursement practices limit patients’ access to care and put NDs at a significant disadvantage when seeking employment. Patients should not have to pay out of network costs for primary care at the hands of insurance companies unwillingness to negotiate fair contracts with NDs.

Since 2018, Naturopathic doctors have been included in the Rural Health Care Provider Incentive Program which offers primary care providers student loan repayment in return for providing health care in underserved communities in rural Oregon. Voting yes to SB772 would keep more NDs in the state to fill this unmet need in our rural communities.

I have fallen in love with Oregon. It is my home. I want to continue working hard for our communities. I should not have to do so at such great economic disadvantage compared to other primary care providers.

Vote yes on SB772 to support fair pay for Naturopathic Doctors.

Sincerely,

Dr. Erin Fix
drerifix@gmail.com