

FROM THE DESK OF

Gregory Garcia ND, LAc

UNCOMMON CARE SUPPORTING INTEGRATIVE MENTAL HEALTH

March 29, 2021

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

Dear Senate Health Care Committee,

My name is **Dr Gregory Garcia** and I am a Naturopathic Doctor (ND). I would like to share my experience working in Oregon as a licensed ND and ask you to please support SB772.

I have been in practice in Oregon for more than 30 years. My work history has been located entirely within Oregon. I have as much compassion and enthusiasm today in working with patients as I did after graduating from NUNM. I work primarily in mental health and substance use and am employed at a community mental health organization treating primarily underserved patients in the Portland community.

I often manage many of the healthcare needs for my patients, including all of their psychotropic medications, lab orders, and recommendations for working with their primary care doctor if they have one. I also make referrals to other competent providers and specialists when appropriate. In addition, I teach my patients how to be more proactive in their own health care, about diet and nutrition, how to stay active, manage stress, and improve their sleep. All of these things come together to create a more complete experience for their health and particularly related to beginning or maintaining psychotropic medications.

Unfortunately, NDs are not being fairly compensated for our valuable contributions to healthcare in this great state. This makes it more difficult for people like me to stay in practice and deliver this essential and unique level of care. It also limits access to healthcare for my patients as well as other individuals and families in the community. And for those of us who have been able to stay in practice, we do so at a great economic disadvantage to our peers, making it difficult to repay student loans, raise a family and give back to the community.

I am asking you to vote yes on SB772 and support fair pay for Naturopathic Doctors.

Sincerely yours,

Gregory Garcia ND, LAc