

Dear Joint Committee On Ways and Means Subcommittee On Education;

My name is Jordan McLendon, ND. I live in Multnomah County, and I practice naturopathic medicine in Washington County. I've been licensed by the state of Oregon since 2019.

My profession has long struggled for equitable treatment from health insurers and other barriers for proper inclusion with the rest of the primary provider types and now is not the time to further this struggle by being placed under management inside the Oregon Health Authority – hardly experts on naturopathic medicine.

The time and work that it looks like would be needed to transition to OHA management seems to be disproportionate to any perceived benefit. It's hard not to see possible risk to the profession's progress with this change - given the history of what it has had to endure all these years since the first license was issued.

Apparently, the state is looking for some small financial efficiency from this consolidation. Whatever that amount is cannot compare to the risks and uncertainties from pushing our licensing board down under that many layers of management.

I know that I (and every colleague I've spoken to regarding this) would rather pay higher licensing fees in order to keep our licensing board independent and without further supervision by unnecessary and potentially hazardous layers of management that most likely know very little about what makes naturopathic medicine special and important to maintain as a real and viable choice for how Oregonians choose to pursue their healthcare.

Sincerely,

Jordan McLendon, ND