

**February 1, 2022**

**Re: YES ON HB 4006, I'm a Patient and support my ND**

**Dear House Health Care Committee,**

My name is Michael Miramontes, and I am a patient of a Naturopathic Doctor. I would like to share my experience working with this medical provider, and ask you to support HB4006.

There are of course many types of medical providers and models of care. The one I have come to value - and desire to keep seeing - is my ND. I feel cared for and I am cared for with the dedicated time and attention to my healthcare needs.

My licensed ND manages the majority of my healthcare needs. I have suffered from what I now know to be multiple chronic illnesses for half of my life and been continually dismissed by other practitioners. It wasn't until I met with my ND who made 90 minutes available to me for our first appointment where I could address *all* of my health concerns—rather than just the most urgent—and as a result they were able to make the necessary diagnostic connections that GPs and specialists have never been able to put together. They refer me to competent providers in the conventional medical world as needed; such as Providence for lab work and various testing by specialists at OHSU. Working with them, they were able to confirm their suspicions and start my treatment and symptom management plan. I cannot imagine how much lower my quality of life would currently be if not for my ND.

Unfortunately, in Oregon, NDs are not being fairly compensated for their contributions to my health and to the healthcare of this state. This puts my doctor on unstable financial ground, and my access to this highly valued care at constant risk.

It is *absolutely essential* that I be able to utilize my health insurance to see my doctor. I cannot afford to both purchase health insurance against major medical expenses and pay out of pocket for my regular and preventive care. That's just not right. With insurance, I paid over \$4,000 out of pocket for all of my healthcare related expenses in 2021. I am almost 32 years old, make under \$40k a year. I have a mortgage and student loans. Without my employer-provided insurance, I don't know how I would afford the care I need. Without the care I need, I don't know how I would be able to continue working full-time. It's such a slippery slope that jeopardizes so many Oregonians well-being.

**I am asking you to please vote yes on HB4006 and ensure fair access to licensed Naturopathic Doctors.**

**Sincerely yours,**

Michael Miramontes