

February 2, 2022

Re: YES ON HB 4006

Dear House Health Care Committee,

My name is John A. Stewart and I am building an in-law apartment at 20140 SE Borges Rd. in Damascus, OR. When it is finished this spring, I will be moving my residence to Oregon from Connecticut, where I am a patient of a Naturopathic Doctor who was trained at the National University of Natural Medicine in Portland. I would like to share my experience working with this medical provider (Craig Fasullo, ND), and **ask you to support HB4006.**

About a decade ago my regular physician (MD) noted my increasing levels of LDL cholesterol in my blood and put me on Lipitor. I was not told about possible side effects or given advice about how to reduce my LDL without prescriptive medicines. I followed his advice and took Lipitor and it did reduce my LDL levels, but I did find some muscle problems occurred and learned more about possible side effects. I decided to see a naturopathic doctor for additional advice.

It was quite a contrast. Dr. Fasullo gave me an hour visit and a thorough checkup—even more than I got during my annual physicals from my physician. He ordered blood tests to determine the particle size distribution of the cholesterol because larger LDL particle sizes have a much lower risk associated with them. He also suggested exercises to reduce LDL levels and ordered a “calcium test” to assess plaque buildup in my blood vessels. With his advice I have been able to reduce my LDL levels, increase my HDL (“good” cholesterol) levels, and reduce my Lipitor use to half of what my physician prescribed. Furthermore, Dr. Fasullo recommended taking CoQ10, which helps avoid some of the possible side effects of Lipitor.

CoQ10 is not a prescription drug. In Connecticut naturopathic doctors cannot order prescription drugs. They can in Oregon, so that is a one area where Oregon has done the right thing. **Please also do the right thing and help reduce the pay disparity between MDs and NDs by requiring that health insurers reimburse naturopathic doctors at the same rate as licensed physicians.**

I will end with two other examples of the differences between medical doctors and naturopathic doctors. In my last visit to my physician for my annual physical I had to sign a statement that, if I brought up medical issues that required any discussion, I might be billed for additional services. Isn't this the purpose of annual visits? My previous doctor, who retired two years ago, had the same thing happen as he moved

from private practice to corporate practice. My naturopathic doctor has no such rules and allowed longer appointments.

Finally, I recently told my physician that I got brief headaches when exercising or whenever I tensed my core muscles, e.g., picking up something. I was worried about having an aneurysm -- an abnormal bulge or ballooning in the wall of a blood vessel in the brain—which my mother first had when she was about my age. (She eventually died when one of these burst!) My doctor ordered a CAT scan. It showed no cancer, but I have since learned from both a naturopath and a different doctor that you need a different test, e.g., an MRI, to see blood vessels in the brain.

I am glad that, when I live in Oregon, I can go to a naturopath and get my needed prescriptions without needing a medical doctor. I hope you will pass legislation that properly recognizes the knowledge and services provided by naturopathic doctors.

Sincerely,
John Stewart, Ph.D.
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