

Dear House Behavioral Health and Health Care Committee,

My name is Cassidy Brown I am a patient of a licensed naturopathic doctor (ND). I would like to share my experience working with my doctor, and ask you to support HB2555.

I have a chronic condition that, although not uncommon, is poorly researched and funded and thus difficult to treat and rarely covered by insurance, leaving little incentive for MDs to specialize in it. I have searched all over for doctors with expertise in my condition who are accepting patients, take my insurance, and have affordable rates. I have ONLY found Naturopathic Doctors who meet this criteria. Without them I would be unable to get treatment, and unable to work since my condition can often be disabling. And yet several NDs I've worked with stopped taking my insurance, forcing me to look elsewhere for care, because they were being treated so unfairly!

Naturopathic doctors are paid about half of what all the other provider types (MDs, DOs, NPs and PAs) are paid for the same exact billing code and same service provided. This discrepancy puts my doctor on unstable financial ground and puts my access to my provider of choice in jeopardy. Naturopathic doctors are being forced to drop insurance plans to remain financially viable.

It is essential that I be able to utilize my health insurance to see my doctor. I cannot afford to both purchase health insurance and pay out of pocket for my regular and preventive care. It's not only unfair, it's unrealistic. I need my ND to stay in network with my insurance and to stay in business!

I am asking you to please vote yes on HB2555 and ensure access to licensed naturopathic doctors.

Sincerely,
Cassidy Brown
Portland, OR