

Submitter: Ilana Gurevich

On Behalf Of:

Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care

Measure: HB2555

Dear Committee members,

I am writing to implore you support HB 2555. I, personally, have had my life saved by a naturopathic physician. At the age of 12 I starting becoming very ill. I was having near constant abdominal pain, diarrhea, and I was very emaciated. Coming from a family of physicians my parents brought me to 5 different gastroenterologist, many PCP's and even an anorexic specialist. After 7 years of going from doctor to doctor I finally entered the office of my 6th gastro and she finally diagnosed me with Crohn's disease. She started me on multiple rounds of pharmaceuticals and none of them could get my GI to calm down. I went through many drug classes and had absolutely no improvement. It was after that point that I decided to seek the care of a naturopathic physician. The ND did a completely different round of testing, discussed and modified my diet, changed my lifestyle and also gave me supplements. 1 year after starting the NDs protocol, for the first time in almost 10 years, I was actually thriving and healthy. That personal experience of getting well in the hands of naturopathic care not only healed my body, it also changed my life. It was then I decided to pursue a degree in naturoapthic medicine. My education took 6 years (for me to earn both my masters in Chinese Medicine and my Doctorate in Naturopathic Medicine) after already having completed a 4 year undergraduate degree. On a daily basis I treat patients with similar stories to mine. I am able to work in conjunction with there gastroenterologist's and PCP's to help them navigate the complex world of digestive disorders. I am only 1 member of there health care team... but to many I am a vital touchstone. Many people come into my office very fearful of the conventional medical system and direction from me leads them back into there Gastro's office more willing to receive life saving care... and others come into my office after having failed medication after medication and viewing things from my lens makes the difference. However, based on the current reimbursements that are set to us by the insurance industry it becomes harder and harder to practice medicine and run my office. Just as every other physician I must employ a team to support me but my reimbursements from insurance don't allow me to be able to run the type of practice that I need to run. Because of this I collect less and less insurance and provide more care to self pay patients. The issues is that self pay patients are not the only ones that need care. By supporting HB2555 you will allow access to all Oregonians to the care that they choose to utilize. Naturopathic physicians are only one option for care, but for many it is there preferred option. Please support us in this bill