

Submitter: Heidi Rein
On Behalf Of: HB3439
Committee: House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3439

I urge you to pass HB3439 out of the House Committee On Behavioral Health and Health Care. With 1200 Licensed Naturopathic Physicians serving over 100,000 Oregonians each year, HB3439 will help improve delivery of primary care services in our state.

I find the healthcare I've received from naturopathic doctors (ND) far exceeds the care from MDs, PAs, and DOs. They understand the systems of the body and how one's mental and emotional impacts one's health. NDs are likely to spend more time with patients to get the heart of the illness. I find I need fewer visits to the doctor, and receive top notch care. The approach of an ND lowers the cost of health care because they do not rely on pharmaceuticals (although, they can prescribe them).

Utilizing a gentler and more long term approach with scientifically proven supplements has transformed my life. Instead of expensive hormones that would have negative long term effects, my ND suggested Maca to help me through menopause and balance my hormones. It worked great! My menopause time of life was easy without the horrible symptoms many people experience and the long term side effects of hormone replacement drugs. NDs work to provide balance to the body, instead of unbalancing drugs. I'm a healthy, happy nearly 60 year old woman who has worked through debilitating depression, menopause, high blood pressure, and more working with NDs. We need more of these doctors, not less. We need medicine 2.0 that NDs can provide.

HB3439 requires that insurance companies pay NDs fairly and on par with what other primary care providers are paid for providing the same services. Currently, NDs are reimbursed on average at half the rate of PAs, NPs, DOs and MDs. NDs are well-regulated and licensed as primary care providers. Thousands of Oregonians seek out the safe, effective and integrative care that NDs provide.

Every year, NDs are financially forced to either lay off staff and close their clinics or to move to a cash model, excluding those who are not affluent. This is diminishing Oregonians' access to safe and effective naturopathic care and we as a state should not be complicit in this. Oregon is currently experiencing a primary care provider shortage which will only be exacerbated if HB3439 does not advance.

HB3439 has a minuscule fiscal impact of 3 million dollars embedded in the OHA biennial budget, yet the profound positive impact on patient care for Oregonians far

outweighs the cost. This allocation would go toward primary care, which has been a priority of this legislature. HB3439 will not only increase patients' ability to choose their doctors, but will also support the hundreds of small businesses across the state that provide naturopathic care.

Please vote "YES" on HB3439 at its upcoming hearing.