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On Behalf Of:  
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As a Naturopathic student graduating in a few short months, concerns about job security, income, and student loan debt are heavy on my mind. A large factor to career planning in the Naturopathic Medical field is determining if you as a healthcare provider able to offer primary care, are able to justify accepting insurance or if you will pursue a private pay only business model. Offering the ability for patients to use their insurance, include Medicaid coverage for primary health care needs should be an easy decision. However, due to the poor reimbursement rates from insurance companies this is a challenging question to ask an incoming new doctor.

I have been assisting a local Naturopathic Primary Care clinic with insurance verification for nearly two years. This clinic is one of the largest Naturopathic clinics in Oregon and they are grateful to be able to provide benefits for patients under the Oregon Health Plan. They are incredibly busy and are always receiving new phone calls from patients seeking to establish care. Unfortunately, due to poor reimbursement rates they are in constant worry for their financial stability. This makes wanting to accept insurance as a new incoming doctor a very challenging question and poses very little incentive for me to want to pursue this path post graduation.

As Naturopathic Physicians we undergo a full 4 years medical degree with the ability to offer primary care to a community that is in high demand for Primary Care Physicians. In a state that has one of the oldest Naturopathic schools in the United States, we are producing a plethora of new primary care physicians. Equal pay parity for Naturopathic Physicians would provide an increased incentive for us to be willing and able to accept insurance and also have a successful business. Allowing patients to use their health insurance coverage to establish care with a Naturopathic primary care physician, would increase healthcare access and also assist with lowering the burden on emergency departments and urgent cares.

Please support the passing of Pay Parity amongst Naturopathic Physicians.