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Subject: Support HB3439 – Ensure Fair Pay for Naturopathic Physicians

My name is Natalie Gustafson, PharmD and I own Lloyd Central Compounding Pharmacy in Portland, Oregon. We've served over 40,000 Oregon patients in the last few years. I urge you to pass HB 3439 out of the House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care. This bill is essential for strengthening primary care access across our state and ensuring fair reimbursement for our naturopathic physicians.

As an independent pharmacy owner, I have worked closely with naturopathic physicians in Oregon for over 16 years. Access to medical care is a key component to protecting our patients. I've seen naturopathic physicians play key roles in helping address practitioner shortages, especially in rural areas, which helps address this critical need.

In my work as a pharmacist, I've spoken to many thousands of patients receiving care from hundreds of naturopathic physicians in Oregon. Patients frequently share how their naturopathic physician spends more time with them than other providers can, listening to their concerns and creating holistic treatment plans. However, these critical providers are not even receiving equal reimbursement as other providers, often only at half the rate, which makes their practices less sustainable. As a result, clinics are closing or shrinking their staff, and more naturopathic physicians must use cash-based models that exclude patients who rely on insurance for access to care.

Oregon already recognizes naturopathic physicians as primary care providers. At a time when Oregon is facing a shortage of primary care providers, we cannot afford to lose naturopathic physicians due to unfair compensation. HB3439 will ensure fair pay, increase healthcare access, and support the small businesses providing this essential care. As a small business owner myself, I understand the challenges faced with poor insurance reimbursements and how unsustainable that is, despite being passionate about providing quality medical care for our patients.

With only a \$3 million fiscal impact already included in the OHA biennial budget, the return on investment is clear—stronger patient access, more provider availability, and better healthcare outcomes for Oregonians.

I strongly urge you to **vote YES on HB3439** at its upcoming hearing. Thank you for your time and commitment to improving healthcare access in our state.

Sincerely,

Natalie Gustafson, PharmD
Owner and Director of Pharmacy
House District 45