

House Committee on Behavioral Health and Health Care

Chair Nosse, Vice-Chairs Javadi and Nelson, and members of the committee:

Yes on HB3439

I am a naturopathic physician in Beaverton and bill insurance for many of my patients. My business is a small business and like all similar businesses, cost increases and inflation have dramatically impacted on the financial sustainability of being able to continue to see patients. Not only have costs increased, but insurance reimbursements have stayed the same, or in some cases decreased. Many of my patients consider me their primary care physician, but if these trends continue, I will no longer be able to accept insurance or even worse close my doors. Oregon is already seeing primary care offices closing or no longer accepting insurance due to these fiscal realities.

HB3439 requires that insurance companies pay naturopathic doctors (ND) 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 primary care providers with an excellent safety record, and thousands of Oregonians seek out naturopathic medicine for their integrated and primary care needs.

The continued trend of NDs no longer accepting insurance or closing 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 may have a minuscule fiscal impact, 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.

It is time to get this done. Please vote yes on HB3439.

Sincerely,

Sara Love, ND