

Dear Committee Members,

You are in a difficult position. With limited resources, both time and money and you are trying to make a determination on the best way to invest in our states future. Health care is an expense of our government and its citizens. It is also an investment in their future.

I am writing to encourage you to vote yes on bill HB-1175 to authorize a Task Force that will look in to regulating Naturopathic Doctors in Colorado. I am a Colorado native, born and raised in Evergreen, Colorado. I graduated from the University of Colorado with a BA in International Relations with an emphasis in Spanish. Being fluent in Spanish I worked as a translator in the medical field. I helped physicians communicate with their Spanish speaking patients. At that time I realized I wanted to be a doctor. I researched medical schools and medical arts. I looked at allopathic medical schools but found that the philosophy and practices of Naturopathic Medicine matched my idea of patient involvement. Currently I am in Naturopathic medical school at Bastyr University in Seattle, Washington. I am in my 4th year of medical school and would like to return to Colorado, my home state to practice when I finish. You have received many letters requesting your support as well as several letters opposing this bill. I am hoping that I can provide you with a unique perspective and information to help you come to a decision to support this bill.

Bastyr, as every accredited school, has a rigorous curriculum that includes all the basic and applied science courses required in every allopathic medical school. We receive extensive diagnostic training and instruction on physical exam, clinical lab work, and pharmacology. In the state of Washington, naturopaths are allowed to prescribe all the same drugs a family practice doctor can with the exception of opiates and other addictive drugs. Our curriculum closely parallels that of conventional, allopathic medical school. However, in addition, we are trained in nutrition and supplement therapies, herbal medicine, homeopathic medicine and physical medicine modalities. We take an average of 25-28 credits a quarter and spend an average of 30-35 hours a week in classroom, and countless hours spent studying. The last two years of our schooling, we participate in clinical training. We see patients in our teaching clinic supervised by licensed naturopathic doctors. Yes in Washington we are licensed physicians because we are trained in our program to be physicians.

Opponents of the bill, including some members of the Colorado Medical Association, have suggested that our medicine is not based on science. My experience is the opposite. In fact, this matter is something that sets our training apart from other less educated practitioners of alternative health "certifications". As naturopathic students are taught to evaluate the research and use therapies that have repeatedly demonstrated their safety and

effectiveness in well-designed research studies. As an example, I have attached a copy of my notes from my class entitled Diet and Nutrient Therapy. If you take a minute to load it, you will see that each therapy is referenced by several research studies including the PubMed ID number allowing you to investigate the research and see that our medicine is based on science.

Today, an increasing number of Americans are using some form of alternative and complementary medicine for their healthcare. Through state licensure of naturopathic doctors, standards will be set to ensure the highest level of training and care for the public. At Bastyr, we receive research-based instruction regarding drug-herb interactions and safe levels of vitamins and minerals to address nutritional deficiencies and disease. It is no coincidence that 8 of the 10 healthiest states in the United Health Foundations ranking¹ are states that license Naturopathic Medicine². Washington State has a medical model wherein Naturopathic physicians (NDs) and Allopathic physicians (MDs) work side by side, teaming up to provide the best care for our patients. Please allow Colorado residents the same confidence and access to quality care by voting yes on bill HB-1175.

In addition to my class notes I have also attached a copy of Bastyr's curriculum for the Naturopathic Medicine Program. Please take a moment to review these documents so that you can make an educated decision on Thursday.

Thank you for your careful deliberation.

Hillary Roland

ND Candidate 2010

References:

- I. United Health Foundations state health rankings:
www.americashealthrankings.org/2008/results.html
- II. List of licensed states: www.naturopathic.org/viewbulletin.php?id=118