

Sarwat Patel
HB 5537

Dear Representative Klarides and Legislative Aide Tracy Mancinelli,

It was a pleasure to talk to Tracy yesterday. Just to provide my information again, my name is Sarwat Patel and I reside in orange at 34 Skyview Rd. My phone number is (203) 685-6909 and my email is sarwatpatel@yahoo.com.

I am a 44 year old, mom of two lovely young girls. In my 20's I trained and worked as a computer engineer. When the girls were born, I chose to be a stay home mom. As a parent I discovered the world of naturopathic medicine in addition to the traditional medical model. I was amazed by what I saw and took a few courses purely due to interest and no desire for a 2nd career. Little did I know of what lay ahead. Soon enough I found myself enrolling into a 4 year accredited naturopathic medical program at university of Bridgeport College of Naturopathic Medicine.

It has been an extremely challenging and yet rewarding 4 years of my life. I come home physically drained yet emotionally uplifted with the impact I see on pts' lives. This required tremendous sacrifice of time w/ hubby and girls. I also realize that the field I have chosen is not perhaps as financially rewarding as many other health care professions. But as you would know, in our lives many times we do things based on passion & purpose.

This has been one of those labors of love & commitment. I truly believe in the wellness care, which empowers patients into being partners in their health care goals. Foundational work in lifestyle, nutritional as well as medicines – natural or pharmaceutical, as needed, is the way to low cost, high-quality, effective and long-term good health physically, mentally and spiritually. This requires a physician to spend time w/ their patients which today's model does not allow. This still remains the cornerstone of a naturopathic medical practice.

Today as I write to you, I do so in many different capacities; as a resident of orange reaching out to you; a mom who wants the best wellness care possible for her loved ones; a community member who has always worked towards increasing awareness regarding good health; a 4th year ND student about to graduate, hoping to stay & practice in CT and give back to the community; and lastly a simple common citizen

who believes that our views and passion counts more than lobby dollars in supporting a cause.

As I mentioned University of Bridgeport College of Naturopathic Medicine is the only accredited 4 year naturopathic medical school east of Chicago. However the scope of practice for NDs has not been updated in over 90 years. Our training includes pharmacology, minor surgical procedures and rigorous clinical and diagnostic skills in addition to other modalities. However the current scope limits aspects of our hand-on training. This not only stops top notch students at times from coming to UB, but also results in many top graduates leaving CT and going to Vermont, Arizona, California and many other states with up to date scope of practice for NDs more in accordance with the training. UB health clinics see 25,000 pts a year, catering to a population that is otherwise unable to afford such services. The impact of the school in our state is incredible & yet we don't remove obstacles that inhibit growth and retention.

The scope expansion includes three elements: 1) Prescriptive authority for a defined list of drugs; 2) Authority to write orders for medical devices and durable medical equipment; and 3) Ability to perform minor procedures in-office.

These changes are necessary for the people of Connecticut in order to:

- Improve healthcare access
- Improve healthcare continuity
- Improve coordination of care
- Meeting primary care needs
- Enhanced education and training
- Consistency with ND scope across states
- Cost and time savings to patients and 3rd party payers

Connecticut Naturopathic Physicians Association is testifying in the hearing on Friday & we all are seeking to add the expansion language to the following bill:

House Bill 5537, An Act Concerning the Department of Public Health's Recommendations Regarding Revisions to the Public Health Statutes.

More details will be presented regarding safety data & efficacy of NDs in other states w/ a more updated scope of practice.

I apologize for the length of this letter. I chose this as my path because I have seen the difference it can make in people's lives, first hand. I will continue to do my part every step of the way. Today it is reaching out to you & asking for your help and support.

I will be at the hearing in the afternoon. My morning will be spent in clinic following up w/ some of my beloved pts & then I will head to the capital to ask you all to allow me to do my job in a more effective & professional manner in accordance with my training. I know your passion brought you to your office and I know you will understand mine.

Yours and in health always,
Sarwat Patel

March 12, 2014