

Public Health Committee Hearing
H.B. No 6797 - An Act Concerning the Practice of Naturopathy
Monday, March 16, 2015
Hartford, CT

Dear Senator Gerratana, Representative Ritter, and members of the Public Health Committee:

Thank you for this opportunity to testify in support of H.B. No. 6797. I ask you to include language in the bill that allows NDs prescriptive authority.

I am 65 years old, I live in New Canaan, CT and I own and operate a successful fabric and interior home design store in Darien, CT.

My lifestyle is very active. My business, like many entrepreneurs is very demanding of my both time and energy. I cannot afford to be sick. I need to be running at the top of my game.

For the past 15 years Dr Gary Gruber, a naturopathic physician in New Canaan, has been my primary care physician. While I also get annual testing done by my gynecologist and endocrinologist, my primary care is naturopathic and holistic. I chose Dr Gruber because of his expertise in environmental medicine, an area of concern for me because early in my career I was a dental hygienist with multiple exposures to chemicals and heavy metals like mercury.

Recently, I noticed I was feeling very fatigued and having difficulty losing those few extra pounds that, like most of my friends we work-on every year. I went to Dr Gruber and he ran a number of blood and saliva tests that indicated that I had become severely depleted in some critical antioxidant nutrients as well as hormones. It was important to me to fix my deficiencies as soon as possible so Dr Gruber recommended IV therapy. My response was great, let's get started! Unfortunately, as Dr Gruber explained, if we were in a different state like New Hampshire or Vermont that would be no problem. In Connecticut he must refer me to an MD colleague for treatment. Since the therapy was important to me, I set up a new office visit with the new doctor. This meant going through the new doctor's new patient intake system and scheduling follow up visits that not only interrupted my work day (since Dr Gruber sees me at my convenience on weekends) but also wasted precious time driving to a completely different town for treatment. In the end the treatment that Dr Gruber recommended was supportive of renewing my health. On the other hand, not being able to see Dr Gruber for a treatment that he is trained and licensed to administer in another State was stressful and did not favorably contribute to my well-being. I should have the freedom to choose the doctor that fits my lifestyle choices and have my doctor treat me within his scope of education and training.

But this IV therapy was not the only treatment that Dr Gruber recommended. Like many of my female friends I experience hot flashes and difficulty falling and staying asleep. Dr Gruber

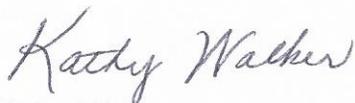
would like to prescribe low doses of female hormones. Again, he must send me to another doctor for treatment that he is very qualified to handle. Why do I need to establish another doctor relationship when I trust Dr Gruber and want him to provide me with the medical care that I need? Seeing two new doctors when my primary doctor is capable and trained to provide these treatments is expensive, time-consuming, and stressful.

Prescriptive authority would benefit me because I will have the best of both worlds, a natural medicine approach combined with conservative medication therapy when needed, both from my ND. I would not have to bounce back and forth between an MD and my ND. While many MDs are willing to work collaboratively with NDs, many are not, so I would be able to avoid that issue. NDs are comprehensively trained to utilize prescriptive medications when necessary and other states have had prescriptive authority for years so why not Connecticut?

In the end, I would be better served as I would have the ability to receive many more primary care services from my ND which I would very much appreciate as it saves me time, money, hassle and it is more efficient.

I fully support expanding the ND scope of practice to include prescriptive authority. I respectfully ask that you include prescriptive authority in H.B. No. 6797.

Sincerely,



Kathy Walker
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