

Testimony of Nicholas Edgerton, student at the University of Bridgeport presented before the Public Health Committee Regarding Inclusion of Prescriptive Authority for Naturopathic Medicine Physicians in H.B. No. 6797 (RAISED): AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRACTICE OF NATUROPATHY.

March 16, 2015

Esteemed Committee Representatives,

When I chose to study naturopathic medicine I did it because of its tremendous potential to improve the way we provide medicine. Preventative medicine is a critical component for the future of healthcare. As a student with degrees in human biology, chemistry, and nutrition; I am well educated in the sciences. Naturopathic medicine is exactly that; cutting-edge science in using the natural and sustainable medicines, the same medicines which were used by our ancestors for thousands of years.

My experience as a student clinician in the Naturopathic clinic ranges from pediatrics to geriatrics and everyone in between. A common trend I witness in patients who come in on polypharmacy – multiple pharmaceuticals, is that they report being more at dis-ease than ever before and want to get off of some of their medications. As students of medicine, we must not only be knowledgeable but proficient in understanding what these drugs are, their mechanisms of action, their effect on homeostasis, and their side effects. As Naturopathic Doctors in Connecticut we are not permitted to change the patients prescription, even though we are trained to know how to. However, when we study the patient’s case and apply appropriate therapeutic principles – being careful not to aggravate any of the medications side effects – the patient begins to report positive changes. To the inconvenience of all, they must go back at this point to their prescribing doctor to ask for an adjustment to their dose. Often bloodwork is required to prove the physiological changes and after this the dose is altered. This is one of many reasons why it is important for Naturopathic Doctors to have prescriptive rights in Connecticut, so we can adjust patient doses as needed during

the healing process. That being said, prescriptive drugs can save lives and improve the quality of life in those who suffer. There are many examples of NDs seeing patients who call for such care, but currently they cannot provide in Connecticut due to the limited scope of practice which lacks specific prescriptive rights. Instead they must refer the time-sensitive case to another professional, deferring their care until they are able to get in with that professional. In conclusion, I feel that passing HB 6797 favorably is a necessary step in the direction of true integrative medicine, where it is not just one modality or another but rather a synergy of respected modalities.

Thank you,

Nicholas Edgerton