



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY WRITTEN BY ENRICO LIVA ND

NATUROPATHIC PRACTICE ACT MODERNIZATION 2016 HOUSE BILL 5534 AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRACTICE OF NATUROPATHY

The Connecticut law governing the practice of Naturopathic medicine was passed 90 years ago and has failed to keep pace with advances made by other states. **CT House Bill 5534** currently before the Public Health Committee seeks to update the Scope of Practice definition to include limited drug prescribing rights. If passed it will bring Connecticut consistent with the standards already legislated in other states that license Naturopathic physicians. ***Please support HB 5534 to allow Naturopathic physicians (NDs) the same prescriptive authority consistent with other states that license NDs.***

Updating the Connecticut Naturopathic Practice Act enables NDs to serve their Connecticut patients' primary care needs, consistent with their ND training and education. The Act would also serve to retain vitally needed primary care doctors. This expansion would enhance the ability of NDs and MDs to develop integrated practices, an approach that is common in states with modernized scope of practice laws. These integrated practices attract patients because they combine both the acute interventions of allopathic medicine with the longer-term restorative strategies of Naturopathic medicine.

Five Naturopathic medical schools are accredited to teach this integrative/holistic approach to health and healing. The University of Bridgeport, College of Naturopathic Medicine (UBCNM), founded in 1997, is one of the five accredited colleges and is a nationally recognized Center of Excellence in Naturopathic Medicine. **UBCNM is the only school east of Chicago and the only Naturopathic College where their home state does not allow Naturopathic physicians to write basic prescriptions.**

The four year post-graduate ND education includes a curriculum with the same biomedical sciences as allopathic physician education for Medical Doctors (MDs). UBCNM program actually requires more hours of basic and clinical science than many top medical schools. This rigorous standard and the misunderstanding among MDs about the value and importance of this profession has limited the size of graduating classes, resulting in fewer qualified healthcare providers who could otherwise serve critical primary care roles in Connecticut. **Many new ND graduates move from CT to other states that have drug authority included in the scope of practice law.**

The University of Bridgeport College of Naturopathic Medicine program presently has difficulty efficiently meeting its educational mission because of the current outdated law. The UB Naturopathic program often meets some required accreditation competencies by sending students and interns out-of-state for components of their clinical training, as well as relying on patient/clinical scenario simulation. This diminishes the credibility of Connecticut's important position as the only state with a Naturopathic medical college in the eastern U.S.

The current law limits the scope of health care services UB can provide to very needy populations who visit the busy *UB Clinics*.

This law change could double or triple the size of the UB Naturopathic College and let Bridgeport compete with other Naturopathic colleges in the US and Canada.

The medical doctor lobby consistently opposes all scope of practice changes for other professions despite the fact that the change is in the best interests of the citizens of Connecticut.