

March 3, 2016

Elizabeth Kontomerkos  
Fairfield CT 06824

RE: HB# 5534

**I am in support of passing HB #5534 An Act Concerning the Practice of Naturopathy**

My family and I have been patients of Naturopathic Doctors (ND's) for over 10 years. As a commercial banker and very busy mother of two, I have truly come to appreciate and rely on my ND's proactive, holistic approach to our health especially with regards to preventative care. Our first doctor visit is always to our ND, as I find the exams and diagnostic testing to be very comprehensive and that the focus is to address and treat the underlying cause and not the symptom.

In addition to providing excellent preventative care, our ND has successfully addressed and corrected chronic issues for many family members and friends such as thyroid imbalance, allergies, and high cholesterol and solutions for fertility issues, post-cancer wellness care, digestive balance, immune system disease and detection of a difficult to identify Lyme disease. Our ND has opened our family's eyes to the effects of certain foods and environmental stressors which have resulted in living healthier lives.

In essence, our ND has become our primary care doctor and it has been truly beneficial and life changing for our family. NDs, in general, have become a more integral part of our healthcare system and therefore many patients like me are demanding to receive a more comprehensive spectrum of qualified care from the ND of our choice.

As a successful business professional, I understand the value and hard work that it takes to earn a trusted client relationship especially in an industry where a client has many choices. NDs are hardworking, astute, dedicated physicians who have truly earned their patients' trust. They continue to do right by their patients who, in growing numbers, choose to come back to them, time and time again in light of the many healthcare choices afforded to them. However, when an ND has to ask a longstanding patient to go to a different doctor because they are prevented from prescribing a certain medication, it puts a burden on these relationships as it prevents the doctor from treating the patient comprehensively. It also results in procedure inefficiencies, more expense to the patient, and adds additional work to our already burdened insurance system. However, most importantly, it delays patients' access to healthcare which in today's world is unacceptable.

Like many people in Connecticut, my family has come to depend on ND's for high quality primary care services, including prevention, diagnosis and treatment of illness. ND's are highly educated doctors who are fully prepared to diagnose and treat patients and prescribe appropriate medications when needed. We should allow our NDs to practice consistent with their education and training, especially

since almost 20 other states already have legislated this. In the states that allow NDs to prescribe medications, the track record for safety is exceptional.

As far as I am concerned, we are blessed here in Connecticut to have such unparalleled access to NDs, thanks to The University of Bridgeport. What worries me the most is that Connecticut's outdated law will limit the number of NDs that choose to stay in CT and instead move to states that have updated scope of practice laws to begin their practices.

Therefore, for the sake of my children and the future of all our families, I urge you to please support this important legislation. It will allow these highly trained physicians to further benefit Connecticut patients with more comprehensive and efficient care while keeping our Naturopathic Doctors local and available.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Kontomerkos". The signature is somewhat stylized and slightly blurred.

Elizabeth Kontomerkos