

Testimony of

Kim McClain

Before the Public Health Committee

Monday, March 7, 2016

1:00 p.m.

## **H.B. AN ACT CONCERNING THE PRACTICE OF NATUROPATHY**

My name is Kim McClain and I have been a resident of Glastonbury, CT for over 30 years. .

I wish to strongly encourage you to support HB 5534. Your support is vital to ensure that health care options in our great state more clearly reflect patients' needs in the 21st century.

My family has greatly benefited from the care and support of a naturopathic practice. It has saved my daughter and me from what could have been a perilous medical path if we had not sought the guidance of a naturopath.

When she was 8, my daughter was getting frequent headaches. Her pediatrician referred her to a pediatric neurologist. Although my daughter had no apparent signs of depression, the neurologist prescribed Ellivell. (This drug has since been found to cause an increase in suicide in young persons.) My instincts told me that this did not seem right.

When we met with our naturopath, the first step was to do a blood test to determine if there were any other possible causes of headaches, e.g. allergies, anemia, etc. We discovered that she had allergies to multiple food items, oak and dust. We immediately went on a three-month strict elimination of the allergens in our diet. We also found that she was slightly dehydrated. This course of action was indeed what was needed to end her headaches. My daughter is now a healthy, strong 19-year-old freshman at Wesleyan University. Last year she a gap year volunteering on organic farms throughout Europe and South America seeking to advance her knowledge of agricultural sustainability in light of climate change. Even in the mountains of Patagonia and other remote parts of South America working on organic farms, she was headache free.

My own story is more recent. In the summer of 2014 I began to suffer from extreme low energy and overall weakness. Although I had none of the "typical" signs of Lyme disease, our naturopath immediately ordered a Lyme titer test. It came back positive. Since she did not have the prescriptive authority this bill would allow, she assisted me in finding a Lyme clinic which was located in Ansonia. It took 10 days

before I could get an appointment. In the meantime, my naturopath gave me a protocol to follow with supplements and diet recommendations.

When I was seen at the clinic I was told that the protocol I was given by the naturopath was excellent and something that they would incorporate in their own practice. While I did benefit from being a patient at the Lyme clinic in Ansonia, it required me to travel one hour each way for treatment. During the initial stages of my illness this proved to be quite a burden as I tired easily and the long trip was very draining. If my naturopathic doctor had prescriptive authority to treat me, I could have avoided many long trips down to Ansonia.

I also wish to note that given the reduced number of primary care physicians, it is all the most important to allow naturopaths to have prescriptive authority. Again, personal experience has alerted me to this problem. A few years ago, I had my mammogram results sent to my primary care physician of 25 years. I learned, however, that according to her records, I was not a patient in her office. I came to understand that the reason my records were obliterated was because I was not requesting care frequently enough. Mind you, no notice was ever sent, no call was ever made. I just ceased to exist when their files were converted electronically. To this day, I have yet to secure a primary care physician. The ones I have called thus far are not currently taking any new patients.

I trust my naturopath to provide the kind of care which is appropriate for me and my family. It is in the best interest of the residents of Connecticut to have the same type of prescriptive authority that has been available in other states for years.

I welcome the opportunity to speak with you about this very important issue. Your support of this bill is imperative to its success.

I can be reached at: 860-463-9602 (cell)  
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Thank you in advance for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
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