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Questions asked of Dr. Ward Hulburt during his testimony on SB 175
Senate Labor & Commerce Committee February 23, 2012

During Dr. Hulbert's testimony to the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee, he was asked two questions that he could not answer. We wanted to follow up with the Committee on those questions.

1. Senator Giessel asked how much Medicaid has paid for prescriptions written by Naturopathic Doctors over the past 18 years.

The Department has no readily available means to determine this number. Although we can review the last 5 years of pharmacy claims, we could only identify instances in which the prescriber number did not match a Medicaid enrolled prescriber. There would be no way to differentiate a naturopath from a non-enrolled physician without looking through each number individually. This would be extremely labor intensive. We would also have to filter out prescriptions written by naturopathic doctors who have other professional licenses that have prescriptive authority separate from their ND license.

2. Sen. Paskvan asked Dr. Hulbert whether he had protested the practice provided by Naturopathic Doctors even once during the past eighteen years. He responded that he had not made such a protest during the 2 ½ years he has been in his current position. Sen. Egan then asked if he knew whether any of his predecessors had made such protest over the past 18 years and he promised to try to find out.

Dr. Hulbert was able to contact three of his predecessors, Drs. Jay Butler, Richard Mandsager, and Peter Nakamura. Their collective tenures cover almost all of that time period. Neither Dr. Mandsager nor Dr. Nakamura had any recollection of having spoken publically or officially regarding the scope of practice of Naturopathic Doctors. During Dr. Butler's tenure, there was a child whose parent was a Naturopathic Doctor who refused tuberculin skin testing. Under the public health powers of the State and in order to protect the public's health, this did become a court case in which the State prevailed. This was seen more as an individual situation rather than one reflecting the Naturopathic profession. Additionally Dr. Butler did have conversations with Sen. Betty Davis during which they discussed the scope of practice for Naturopathic Doctors and during which Dr. Butler expressed to Sen. Davis concern that training for that profession is not standardized.