



22 March, 2023  
Representative Mike Prax  
State Capitol Room 108  
Juneau, AK 99801  
RE: Support for House Bill 115

Dear Representative Prax,

Thank you for supporting, and sponsoring, House Bill 115, which updates the scope of practice for licensed Naturopathic Doctors to reflect their level of training and competency. As such, it allows for prescriptive management and minor office procedures.

As you know, our state is in a medical crisis with a scarcity of medical providers, inadequate to meet the needs of our communities. There are about 50 licensed Naturopathic Doctors in this state who are qualified, trained, and ready to support Alaskans with their healthcare needs. House Bill 115 will help address these needs. In the current model of care, Naturopathic Doctors must refer patients to other, similarly trained, medical providers for prescriptive needs and minor office procedures. It causes a great deal of frustration to our patients and causes them to incur additional medical costs. Due to the limited availability of other providers, our patients must wait long periods before they can even be seen for these needs. It is an unnecessary burden to our healthcare infrastructure.

Naturopathic Doctors receive training in clinical pharmacology, commensurate with our NP colleagues who have a much less restrictive scope of practice in our state. We receive more training than PAs who have a much broader scope of practice in our state, with minimal oversight. Currently, I need to refer patients to my PA colleague to write prescriptions for my patients. Ironically, when I practiced medicine in Arizona, I was one of the physicians overseeing the PAs in my office.

In many states, Naturopathic Doctors have prescriptive rights to include scheduled medications. In fact, I practiced in Arizona for many years, and had a DEA number and prescriptive authority, including schedule II (limited) through IV drugs; and was able to perform sutures, IUD removals, administer vaccines, etc. These are necessary tools for primary care providers. We are well-trained to utilize these tools, and our Alaskan patients need us to have the ability to prescribe medications and perform minor office procedures. It will help cushion the overwhelming healthcare burden, and it will prevent our patients from requiring duplicative office appointments to meet their healthcare needs.

It simply makes sense. We are trained, and we are capable. There is a need. We can meet that need. It is in the best interest of Alaskans.

Sincerely,

Dr. Natalie J. Wiggins  
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