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Health and Government  
Operations Committee

Government Operations and Estates  
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Health Facilities and  
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## *The Maryland House of Delegates* ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

### Health and Government Operations Committee

### HB219 Naturopathic Doctors- Formulary Council Membership, Formulary Content, and Scope of Practice

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HB219 is the next step to the progression of Naturopathic Doctors, Formulary Council. We have worked with stakeholders to make a number of accommodations.

As a quick refresher, in 2014 we passed the bill that licensed naturopathic doctors. Then in 2016, as required by the licensure bill, we passed the bill that established the Naturopathic Doctors Formulary Council within the Maryland Board of Physicians:

- Tasked with developing and recommending a formulary for use by licensed naturopaths that the Board of Physicians must approve.
- Review the formulary annually to decide if changes need to be made to the practice of naturopathic medicine.

If the COVID crisis has taught us anything it's that we need MORE access to healthcare for our citizens...not less. This is the year to pass this simple bill to ensure our Naturopathic doctors can practice and care for Marylanders as they have been trained.

#### WHAT DOES THIS BILL DO?

House Bill 219 would expand the formulary for naturopathic doctors to include:

- all prescription drugs and devices, excluding controlled substances, recommended by the Naturopathic Doctors Formulary Council and approved by the State Board of Physicians (MBP).
- expanding their authority from just dispensing and ordering to include prescribing and administering.
- adding a nurse practitioner as a member of the Formulary Council.

#### WHAT IS THE NEED FOR THE BILL?

This bill solves the problem of prescribing by Naturopathic Doctors that previously is not clearly outlined, by expanding their scope to give them prescriptive authority. However, this bill does not give them the authority to start prescribing every available drug. They have to go before the Formulary Council with the request and then the Council will decide whether to recommend that authority, which then has to be approved by the Board of Physicians.

It's important to note that prescribing drugs is not at the core of naturopathic doctors' practice and philosophy but there are certain instances when it is necessary and without having this authority, the treatment of their patients is hindered, and then they must send their patients to another doctor.

Neighboring jurisdictions permit this and we just want to allow our naturopathic doctors the ability to provide the same level care to their patients.

**I urge the Committee to favorably report HB219**