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Testimony in Favor of HB 867 – March 4, 2025

Madam Chair, members of the committee, my name is Dr. Carrie Baldwin-Sayre. I am a naturopathic physician and Vice President of Advancement at the National University of Natural Medicine (NUNM) in Oregon. My testimony is intended to highlight the education and training of naturopathic doctors.

Naturopathic medical programs are four-year graduate programs. NUNM's program includes 4,422 hours of total education, including 1,254 hours of direct student involvement in patient care and over 140 hours of didactic training in pharmacology.

Students must pass three hands-on objective clinical examinations during their education, the final exam occurring after a year with their own supervised patient load. They must pass each examination, which includes pharmaceutical prescribing, to progress to the next level of patient responsibility.

I will drill down a little on the extent of pharmacology training. Students receive instruction in pharmaceutical prescribing throughout 6 pharmacology-specific courses plus an additional 15 courses where prescribing is an integral piece of the course. 3rd and 4th year students then experience hands-on supervised pharmaceutical prescribing in a state-credentialed Primary Care clinic where they treat high-complexity patients, including those with heart disease, diabetes, substance use disorder and mental health conditions.

After graduation, all licensable NDs must pass 2 national board examinations.

In summary, naturopathic medical programs prepare graduates to be competent, safe, effective healthcare providers. HB 867 removes an unnecessary restriction on the ability of naturopathic doctors to practice. Naturopathic doctors are rigorously educated and trained to prescribe medications. Maryland's law should be updated to reflect the training of NDs.

Thank you.