



NH Acupuncture & Asian Medicine Association

A Voice for Asian Medicine in the Granite State

The Honorable John Hunt
House Commerce and Consumer Affairs Committee Chair
107 North Main Street
Concord, NH 03301

February 28, 2011

Dear Mr. Hunt:

The New Hampshire Association for Acupuncture and Asian Medicine is writing in support of HB351 which provides insurance parity for board-certified, New Hampshire licensed naturopathic doctors. As an organization that supports and provides guidelines for the professional delivery of acupuncture and Asian medicine by board-certified, licensed providers in the state of New Hampshire, we recognize both the need and right for individuals to have access to regulated natural and alternative approaches to basic healthcare.

Consider for a moment the fact that Chinese doctors in the Far East were once paid to keep their patients healthy and were not paid if they became sick. Systems of medicine that focus on changing lifestyle habits to prevent illness and create health will serve to establish healthier communities and reduce the overall cost of health care. And they will provide a foundation of stability and needed change for our currently overburdened and cost prohibitive system.

It is time to mobilize resources that can provide real change in improving the direction of our current state of health, when scales are tipping in the direction of increasing rates of illness and chronic disease in our country. Health is a basic human need. Engaging individuals at the root level of that which creates the foundation of health is precisely where we can make the necessary change to facilitate optimal health in each individual and as a collective society.

HB 351 does not suggest coverage for any new services or treatment. It provides coverage for the same services currently delivered by other primary care physicians; services such as annual physical exams, children's check-ups, pap smears, mammograms and cholesterol screening. These preventive services are essential in keeping health care costs low.

We have a shortage of primary care providers in New Hampshire. The legislature evaluated the rigorous training of naturopathic doctors over 15 years ago and concluded that they are well-trained and capable to practice as primary care providers. HB 351 removes the economic barrier that many patients face and allows New Hampshire citizens to access the services of these primary care providers.

The New Hampshire Association for Acupuncture and Asian Medicine is in favor of HB351 and the insurance parity for naturopathic doctors. We ask you to please support HB 351.

Sincerely,

Dr. L. Cindy Fecteau, PhD, OT/L, LAc
President, New Hampshire Acupuncture and Asian Medicine Association