

**Email to be sent as soon as possible by NDs to all their patients, friends, relatives, colleagues, etc.**

Suggested title of email, to appear in recipient's In Box: **Urgent: Your Rights to ND Care Under Attack**

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

**A bill has been passed by the Hawaii Senate Health Committee that could seriously undermine your access to quality naturopathic care.** The bill, SB2577 SD1, would take away many of the rights gained in 2009 when several hundred patients submitted emails to lawmakers in support of efforts to improve Hawaii's naturopathic law. This overwhelming response played a crucial role in changing the law, and now you can take action again to protect your rights to naturopathic care.

**How the proposed bill could affect you:** SB2577 SD1 would hinder the practice of naturopathic medicine in numerous ways, preventing or impeding your naturopathic doctor's ability to write many prescriptions, and depriving you of other naturopathic care options that you currently have. This bill would also drastically change your personal relationship with your naturopathic physician by removing your right to have your naturopathic care be a private matter between just you and your doctor. It would require your naturopathic doctor to have an MD "oversee" your naturopathic care, including even the specific doses of your personal naturopathic prescriptions. This bill could even destroy your relationship with your doctor altogether, because the requirements in SB2577 SD1 are so draconian that some naturopathic physicians could feel compelled to leave Hawaii if the bill passes.

**Your help is urgently needed to stop this bill** and preserve your rights to the kind of naturopathic health care you deserve. Here's how you can take action and make a huge difference: please email messages opposing this bill to legislators at the address below. You can copy and paste the sample message that follows into an email. Add your name and address (and your name at the bottom), enter **Oppose SB2577 SD1** in the subject line, and send. For maximum effect, please modify and personalize the message - for example, add a story that shows how naturopathic medicine has helped you and why we need to expand, not shrink, the prescription abilities of naturopathic doctors. The sooner you send your message, the better.

**The deadline for sending your messages is 10:30 am this Wednesday, February 19th** (24 hours prior to the bill's hearing). If you are receiving this email after the deadline, there's no urgent need to send a message, as decision-making on this bill will occur at the hearing. However, messages sent after the deadline but prior to the hearing are still included on the website as late testimony.

Please let all your relatives and friends know about the damage this bill could do to your health care options, and rally their support to help us fight it. Forward this message to everyone you know, and ask them to spread the word and submit messages too. You don't need to be a Hawaii resident to make a difference; if people in other states submit emails, it will definitely help. We can't overstate the importance of getting as many people as possible to join you in sending messages opposing this bill. The future of your access to quality naturopathic care is at stake.

Thank you for whatever you can do to help!

Sincerely,

**(Each individual ND sending this message should sign here, and include all of what follows along with the message)**

**Please email your messages to: [CPNtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov](mailto:CPNtestimony@capitol.hawaii.gov)**

Your Name /Address

February , 2014

Position: Strong Opposition to SB2577 SD1 Relating to Naturopathic Physicians

Hearing at 10:30 am on February 20th, 2014 in Conference Room 229

To the Honorable Senator Rosalyn H. Baker, Chair, the Honorable Senator Brian T. Taniguchi, Vice Chair, and other Distinguished Members of the Senate Committee on Commerce and Consumer Protection:

I'm writing to request that you do everything in your power to oppose SB2577 SD1. This bill would essentially require naturopathic physicians to restrict or give up prescription rights that are essential to their services. My naturopathic doctor's ability to write certain prescriptions when I need them, without the unreasonable restrictions proposed by SB2577 SD1, is an important part of my health care.

There's no good reason for this bill, and every reason to oppose it. Since the Legislature rightfully granted Hawaii's naturopathic physicians prescriptive authority almost five years ago, there has been no evidence whatsoever of patient harm pertaining to these prescription rights brought to the naturopathic Board. There has also been no overuse of prescriptive authority, no cases of naturopathic physicians using it outside their training and scope of practice, and not one lawsuit filed in this regard. Instead, the public has benefitted greatly from this prescriptive authority. The training of naturopathic physicians sufficiently prepares them for their prescription privileges, and they are highly qualified to offer all the services they currently provide, to the full extent of their licensed scope of practice, which is well defined. Standards of care have recently been adopted by the Board that provide oversight and clear criteria for the practice of naturopathic medicine in Hawaii. The restrictive requirements in SB2577 SD1 have no precedent in other states where naturopathic physicians have prescriptive rights. Furthermore, the Hawaii naturopathic Board has set some of the highest standards in the US for the practice, safety, and competence of naturopathic physicians. Hawaii's naturopathic physicians have even taken the unusual step of voluntarily recommending that they complete 15 hours of continuing education in pharmacology biennially.

One of the more misguided aspects of this bill is the proposal that naturopathic physicians would be required to have MDs review all of their prescriptions, including the amounts prescribed, and that these MDs would address any concerns they have with these prescriptions to the naturopathic physician and the board. This is an extremely ill-conceived proposal. A naturopathic physician is a very different type of medical expert than an MD. With all due respect, MDs are not at all equipped to make sensible reviews of naturopathic prescriptions, because their education has few, if any, requirements for training in the use of naturopathic treatment modalities. The education of my naturopathic physician far exceeded that of any MD in many areas essential to my health care. Naturopathic doctors are highly trained to be independent providers who consult with other health professionals when they consider it appropriate for the patient, *not* when required by law to subordinate their expertise to individuals untrained in naturopathic medicine. In addition, requiring one type of doctor to oversee and review a very different type of doctor's practice would create endless implementation and legal problems when it comes to issues such as insurance, patient privacy, HIPAA laws, and much more.

SB2577 SD1 would also hinder naturopathic physicians and reduce their effectiveness by placing other unnecessary, inappropriate, and impractical burdens on their practices. These include the requirement that they submit detailed monthly reports of each item they prescribe to the board, the requirement that they receive authorization from the Department of Commerce and Consumer Affairs in order to prescribe any item from their own formulary, and the requirement that certain important prescription items, such as vaccines, medical oxygen, and some injectable medicines, be excluded from the naturopathic formulary. In some cases, requirements that SB2577 SD1 would impose seem blatantly unfair, and may even be discriminatory, because no comparable requirements are placed on other types of physicians.

If this bill is not stopped, it will undermine the high standards that the people of Hawaii have come to expect from naturopathic physicians. It will also reduce the quality of naturopathic care and the effectiveness of some of our most valued primary care providers, at a time when primary care physicians are already in short supply. The last thing we need is to turn back the clock on the prescriptive abilities of our naturopathic physicians. Please oppose SB2577 SD1 and protect my access to the high level of naturopathic care that I deserve.

Thank you,