

February 14, 2024

Dear Study Commission Members,

I, Lisa Rishton, am writing to you today to ask for your support in the passing of this bill to improve patients' accessibility to quality medical care from licensed Naturopathic Physicians.

Passage of this bill is very important to me personally because the care provided to me by Dr. Kazantzis, a Naturopathic Physician, has greatly contributed to my overall well being.

I have a complicated medical history. I am often referred to various specialists in an effort to determine proper diagnoses. While each specialist is effective in his/her own medical specialty, it is rare to find a doctor willing to look at your health history as a WHOLE and make connections in order to determine further testing and prevention treatment.

In my experiences, specialists simply rule out a diagnosis in their particular specialty....no further tests. A naturopathic doctor continues to look at test results and moves beyond that to determine the root cause of a symptom. This prevents the symptom from getting worse and causing full blown disease. It's prevention medicine instead of reaction medicine. It's what Americans need.

Some might say that this is what a primary care doctor is meant for. Well, currently, in the state of RI we have a severe shortage of primary care professionals willing to take on new patients. Additionally, care from a primary care doctor has felt very different to me. I feel their practice and procedures are dictated by insurance company regulations, as well as the pharmaceutical companies. The drive seems to be to treat symptoms as opposed to finding the root cause. Yes, this is how money is made but it does not provide quality preventative care for the patient.

Passage of this bill could demonstrate that Rhode Island legislators are dedicated to quality health care, as well as healthcare choice, for their constituents.

While employed by the DoD, I worked and lived overseas for 24 years. During those 24 years, I was treated regularly by doctors in South Korea, Germany, and Japan to include cancer treatment and follow up care. My experiences have shown me that American healthcare pales in comparison to each of the three countries mentioned above. Access to licensed Naturopathic Physicians for Rhode Islanders would be one way to remedy the healthcare deficit here in our state.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Lisa Rishton  
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