



To: Senate Committee on Public Health & Welfare, Chairwoman Beverly Gossage

From: Laura Rues, ND, President of the Kansas Naturopathic Doctors Association

Date: February 17, 2023

Subject: SB113

Position: Support

I am asking for your support to include naturopathic doctors in the Kansas Corporate Practice of Medicine (CPOM) Doctrine. All healthcare providers should be included in the CPOM doctrine to protect patients from deceptive behavior that *might* come with the private ownership of medical offices by non-licensed individuals. Naturopathic doctors are not currently included in this doctrine, therefore are **not forbidden** from engaging in the corporate practice of medicine.

This is problematic for two reasons. *Firstly*, it can interfere with independent medical judgment due to corporate interests which compromises ethical standards of practice; *secondly*, it excludes naturopathic doctors from working with other licensed healthcare providers.

Currently, the exclusion of **naturopathic doctors from CPOM qualifies us here as a business entity, not as healthcare providers.** *We are healthcare providers.* We are regulated under the Kansas Board of Healing Arts. We carry malpractice insurance. We are licensed to diagnose and treat.

Naturopathic doctors are highly-trained and skilled healthcare providers who combine traditional medicine and natural medicine with conventional healthcare. Training includes attending a four-year graduate-level medical school program at accredited naturopathic medicine schools with approximately 1,330 hours of clinical training, over 4,100 contact hours of instruction and passage of two national board examinations. **We have been licensed and practicing naturopathic medicine in Kansas for over twenty years.**

There is a demand in Kansas for integrative and naturopathic medicine. Hospitals are not required to abide by CPOM, and because of this, are able (and do!) employ naturopathic doctors to provide holistic patient care.

This statute change would prevent naturopathic doctors from being hired by corporations (except as directed in K.S.A. 65-28,134) and also allow collaborative care with other licensed medical providers in an outpatient healthcare setting. Ultimately, passage of SB113 will ensure best practice for patients.