

Dr. Barbara MacDonald-Rodgers, ND, LAc

April 4th, 2025 – Testimony in support of LD 1128

Good afternoon Committee Chair Senator Bailey, Co-chair Representative Gramlich and honorable members of the Joint Standing Committee on Health Coverage, Insurance and Financial Services. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of LD 1128 today.

My Name is Dr. Barbara MacDonald-Rodgers. I grew up in Waterville and now practice in Rockport.

I am a licensed naturopathic doctor, acupuncturist and Chinese herbalist.

I have a full-time solo practice in general naturopathic and Chinese Medicine with a focus on helping cancer patients navigate conventional treatment.

I am the author of several published articles in the peer-reviewed journal The Townsend Letter and the author of textbook called The Breast Cancer Companion: A complementary care manual. I completed my naturopathic and Chinese medicine training in Portland, Oregon where I also did my residency and was an associate professor.

I am grateful for your time and attention on behalf of the thousands of Mainers who enjoy the benefits of having a naturopathic doctor on their healthcare team. Thank you for attention.

Some of you may have been patient of my late father, Dr. Dick MacDonald who practiced at Waterville Osteopathic Hospital during my childhood. I will begin by reading a letter that he wrote in 2022 to a member of the Osteopathic Board, Dr. Boyd Buser.

READ LETTER (edited version inserted below)

When I practiced in Oregon, I had a DEA number and full prescribing rights in alignment with my 4-year naturopathic medical training. Since moving back to Maine in 2010, there have been hundreds of visits where a patient has asked me to prescribe a medication that I cannot write an order for here that was of no issue in Oregon. This needs to change.

I enjoy referrals from oncologists at New England Cancer Specialists in southern Maine and our local hospitals. These MD's and DO's appreciate that I am not only up-to-date on drug:herb/nutrient interactions, but often find myself in the position to educate their pharmacy staffs on concerns I have with co-prescribing. Licensed NDs have more than sufficient training to prescribe from a modernized formulary and any statements to the contrary are unfounded.

My father, and his brother, Dr. Earnest MacDonald are why osteopathic physicians are covered under Medicare. Their testimony in 1965 in front the United States Congress was a professional turning point allowing for Medicare coverage. It is ironic that I am now standing up for the rights of my profession as they were in the 60s.

If you pass L.D. 1128 "An Act to Modernize the Formulary for Naturopathic Doctors" –

- 1) We will see a wonderful increase in young licensed NDs practicing and raising their families here in rural communities
- 2) We will have fewer confused pharmacists
- 3) We will have thousands of happier patients not experiencing delays in necessary care
- 4) I will be happier to know that I can prescribe a potentially life-saving medication without having to ask a local medical colleague if they would be willing to see my patient and prescribe.

Thank you and I welcome your questions.

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Dr. Barbara MacDonald-Rodgers, ND, LAc

October 18, 2022

Boyd Buser, DO
20 Stone Road
Kennebunkport, ME 04046

cc: MOA Exec. Director, Amanda Richards
Brian Kaufman, DO MAO president
Jodie Hermann, DO MAO president-elect

Dear Boyd,

Since Pat passed away, I have more time to write you a letter that I feel strongly about. As you know, my daughter Barbara, is a licensed Naturopathic Doctor practicing in Rockport. She has a very good reputation in her community of physicians and patients as do her colleagues.

~~I don't know if you are in support of the new Maine Osteopathic Association's legislative agenda to limit non-physician practice rights and the use of the term "physician" by non-physician doctors? I hope, that through you, the board is considering this from both sides of the situation.~~

I continue to be impressed by Barbara's broad scope of knowledge in the general practice area and find that the licensed naturopathic doctor in many cases has superior expertise than the DO. I guess what I am asking the board to consider is that naturopaths in general practice are and could do more to take the rural load off DOs. By limiting legislative changes to update the ND law ~~to be on par with other states like Vermont and Washington~~, we may be losing good doctors from practicing within their scope of training who would otherwise have practiced in Maine's rural communities.

I am sure my daughter will be willing to speak with you or another member of the board on this matter.

I wish you the best and thank you for your contribution to the Osteopathic care in Maine.

Sincerely,

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