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April 6, 2015

Senator Block  
State Capitol, Room 4072  
Sacramento, CA 95814  
VIA FAX: 916- 651-4939

**Re: SB 538 (Block) Naturopath**  
**AAP-CA Position: Oppose**

Dear Senator Block,

The American Academy of Pediatrics, California respectfully opposes your proposed legislation SB 538 (Block). The scope and quality of naturopathic education do not prepare its practitioners to make either an adequate diagnosis or provide appropriate treatment. Naturopathic services are not covered by most insurance policies for good reason: a lack of evidence of appropriate effectiveness. Only 17 states allow the practice of naturopathic medicine and California is the only large state among them.

We are in strong agreement with concerns raised by the California Medical Association and the California Academy of Family Physicians, as follows:

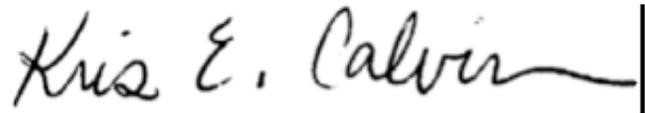
- Naturopathic teaching claims that natural herbal remedies are generally superior to pharmaceuticals in the treatment of most diseases, yet the federal Food and Drug Administration (FDA) forbids manufacturers of herbal preparations and dietary supplements from making therapeutic claims.
- Naturopaths should not be engaging in surgical procedures, however minor they may be. Naturopaths have no training in care of hospitalized patients and are not familiar with the clinical manifestations of diseases serious enough to require hospital care.
- Compared to medical school and residency training, a naturopathic education consists of relatively few hours of study on pharmacological treatment of disease and provides virtually no clinical reinforcement of pharmaceutical intervention on patients during clinical rotations or optional post-graduate training.
- Naturopathic practitioners might fail to diagnose in a timely fashion or delay referring patients for appropriate medical treatment, endangering the health and safety of patients with serious diseases who are relying solely on care from naturopathic practitioners. In addition, such treatments may divert patients away from proven therapies that can clearly help to unproven or disproven ones that potentially can be dangerous.
- An injection of any kind, even something as seemingly benign as vitamin B-12, comes with risks. Crohn's disease, pancreatic insufficiency, autoimmune atrophic gastritis and certain prescription medications as well as other treatable diseases that cause persistent pernicious anemia can only be treated by non-naturopaths. Even leading naturopathic associations are divided over the administration of injectable medications. The American Association of Naturopathic Physicians and the American Naturopathic Medical Association, two naturopathic organizations, are divided over this and other issues of naturopathic medicine.

Governmental endorsement of naturopathy compromises our health care system, especially at a time when our state is working to improve health care and implement the Affordable Care Act.

For the health and safety of consumers, the American Academy of Pediatrics, California opposes SB 538.

California pediatricians thank you for your public service and leadership. We appreciate your consideration of our concerns about SB 538 (Block).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kris E. Calvin" followed by a horizontal flourish and a vertical line.

Kris Calvin  
Chief Executive Officer  
American Academy of Pediatrics, California