

Dear colleagues, representatives, Mr. Crawford and madam chairman Harhart,

Thank you for inviting me to be here at this historic hearing to address a very important issue proposed in the HB 1717. Although I realize that this is the begin, and perhaps the results are far down the road, to use the old cliché "every journey begins with the first step."

While the HB 1717 may seem an impersonal issue to some, many of us will be affected by the outcome of the legislature on a very personal level. While I am about to share with you my personal experience my passion concerning the bill is much broader, because I believe the final outcome will affect a majority of citizens of this great commonwealth we live in.

Pennsylvania has been my home for the past forty years, almost from the time I came to US from my former country of Czechoslovakia. I attended one of the finest liberal art colleges in PA – Muhlenberg College located in Allentown where I earned BS degree in Biology. After graduation I was fortunate to be involved in cancer research at a world renowned Fox Chase Cancer institute in Philadelphia. Our team was one of the first to investigate the role nutrition specifically, sugar, has in the development of mammary gland carcinoma. At the end of the project the results were definitively positive as a result our research project was black balled. (In case you are not familiar with the term –black balled- means that the results of your research would never be published in peer review periodicals. This usually happened when the grant provider had the power to overrule the researcher.)

Coming from a communist country that was just occupied for wanting to be free, I believed President Nixon when he declared in 1973 that the US was going to find cure for cancer. I was young, idealistic and full of hope and vision. I believed when I joined Fox Chase team that there was a possibility I could be part of the group that would indeed find cure for cancer. However when our results were blackballed my idealism vanished as I discovered that cancer research was as much politics as it was research, and perhaps more.

While working in Fox Chase I also enrolled in the University of Pennsylvania to take nutrition and immunology, While in Muhlenberg my friends called me "health nut" to

me that was a great compliment. Because of my limited English I translated the term literally, not realizing that it was not always meant as a compliment. The reason for this endearing title was my desire for healthy food; this determination arose from the fact that I gained 60 pounds the first 6 months in the US, and kept gaining weight until I became twice the size I was upon my arrival. While in Muhlenberg my life changed when I met Mr. Rodale the editor of Prevention magazine whose offices were just outside of Allentown in nearby Emmaus. With Mr. Rodale's help we convinced Muhlenberg administrators to offer healthy food choices in the cafeteria. Slowly I dropped my newly gained weight and after losing 86 pounds I stabilized at my healthy weight, and have remained there for the past 40 years. Through Mr. Rodale's encouragement I read every book regarding nutrition.

When I enrolled at the University of Pennsylvania I have had a substantial knowledge of nutrition, far more than the first year medical students who were in the same lecture room with me. After a week of sitting in the nutrition course I realized that I knew more than the instructor teaching the class, she appeared to have graduated about 25 years prior and it sounded to me as if she had not read a nutritional book since. I dropped out of the course. There was a pivotal point in my immunology class as well. The tenured professor teaching the course stood in the middle of the lecture hall and declared that the thymus gland was not important in adults. This declaration today seems preposterous, however remember this was late seventies and the HIV has not hit the headlines. In 6 months from this memorable day the HIV was in the headlines and the thymus gland gained the respect of every immunologist, doctor and the lay person. The reason I am sharing these episodes is to remind us all that medicine is a very dynamic and always changing field. It is a fact that perhaps no field is as dynamic and fast changing as the field of nutrition. I have always combined science with common sense, growing up on a farm provided me with an opportunity to benefit from nature and its inhabitants.

The human body has not changed for the last forty thousand years however the human diet has changed during the last 60 years enormously; the scientist in me is having challenge in accepting that there will be no consequences in consuming the manmade chemicals that the body was never designed for.

Having been disappointed in the research environment, and following my desire to help people to heal and regain their health I began my journey into nutrition. Keep in mind that my path started over thirty years ago. There were no universities teaching nutrition. I remember meeting Dr. Joe Pizzorno when he was lobbying the congress to have John Bastyr University accredited as a naturopathic university. Ten years later I personally met with about 56 congressman and 17 senators to ask for their support of (Dietary Supplement Health and Education Act) DSHEA legislature. I joined and have been a member of functional medicine since its embryonic stages in the early 1980's. I have taken every functional medicine seminar ever given. When NINE (National Institute of Nutritional Education was offering nutritional certification I enrolled and graduated.) Later I obtained my Naturopathic Doctorate degree from Canyon College – a distance learning institution. Among the textbooks used for the naturopathic degree is the same text book recommended at John Bastyr University "Textbook of Natural Medicine" co-authored by Joe Pizzorno and Michael Murrey. (I interviewed Michael Murrey ND on my radio show only 2 weeks ago where he thanked me for the tremendous contribution to the field of natural medicine.) The exams were proctored, in other words you had to know the material to pass the tests.

While I am thrilled that we have both the recognition and expansion of naturopathic schools, we must also recognize that many have toiled for years to achieve that recognition, and the years of experience is invaluable. The HB 1717 is a bill whose time has come. To delay the process even just one day is causing disservice to the great people of Pennsylvania. Perhaps nothing is as precious to human being as our health. Rather than focusing on crisis intervention or an emergency - naturopathic doctors focus on preserving health and preventing degenerative diseases. All of us involved in this process must ask ourselves a single question: "what is the objective of HB 1717?" if the answer is to ultimately benefit the people of PA and to offer them freedom of choice then this bill must be an all inclusive legislature. We must also agree that no one profession has the monopoly on how to help all the people of PA.

Imagine if those holding drivers' licenses to drive 18 wheelers demanded that every driver gets this type of license and the legislators agreed. Hence those who ride motorcycles would now be required to get an 18 wheeler license, and those who drive sedans would have to do the same. Not only would this idea be considered

preposterous but people would be rioting in the streets, and those that propose it would be questioned for their intentions. We are in a similar situation. The allopathic doctors are trained in crises management of diseases and yet their patients demand of them to be masters of nutrition and healing, a role they cannot fulfill.

America finds itself divided on too many fronts; we in this room have an opportunity to unite on one of the most critical issues every Pennsylvanians will face sooner or later during their life. The financial ability to pay for their health! It is not my intention to educate you on the economics to care for the aging Americans. The national purse strings are overstretched, and the future looks very bleak in deed. Imagine all Pennsylvanians who are now paying out of pocket to stay healthy had that opportunity taken away from them this will indirectly force them into poor health while immersing them into the already overburdened health care system. Those supporting the HB 1717 will argue that the naturopathic medical doctors will serve the role to help those who want to stay healthy, and I believe their intentions. The truth of the matter is that: since most of the people who are seeking an adjunct therapy are paying out of pocket and most will not be able to afford the naturopathic medical doctors fees, nor will all of these individuals require a naturopathic medical doctor's services.

I do not practice medicine, meaning I do not diagnose, treat, prescribe; blood tests, genetic tests, and other tests consequently my fees are very reasonable. I have not increased my fee for the last six years and my 30 to 40 minutes appointment cost my client \$35.00. I wonder how that compares to the naturopathic medical doctor's fee. Most likely we offer same service including diet, supplements, metabolic detoxification, physical activity recommendations and stress reduction techniques. My services complement all health care professionals, and I utilize a wide network of professionals to send my clients to for services out of my scope of expertise. I count many allopathic doctors among my friends and I defend them on my radio show for the past 17 years. Most of them acknowledge that they are not prepared to help their patients with nutrition.

We all remember the disdain which existed between the medical doctors and chiropractors, a case that could not be settled reasonable but in fact ended up in the courts. Unfortunately the same disdain exists now between medical doctors and

naturopathic doctors, even while the medical doctors acknowledge that they are not trained nor are they prepared to help their patients in the area of nutrition and health. Finally the same attitude pervades between naturopathic doctors who attended a resident type medical schools and those that have been pursuing their education via other methods. Let me propose a simple solution; recognize that there is a difference between these two groups. The naturopathic doctors attending campus environment and participating in a resident programs should in fact be recognized as medical doctors and they have earned their place on the same level as allopathic medical doctors. On the other hand those who have completed their education and have been practicing for years or decades also need to be recognized for their contribution and benefits. These professionals should be recognized as traditional naturopathic doctors.

In the past we have witnessed a fusion between medical doctors and the osteopathic doctors to the point where it is very difficult to distinguish one from another. Who is to say that in the future the naturopathic medical doctors will be very different from the allopathic doctors. This fusion is not difficult to imagine. Progressively the allopathic medical doctors will embrace more natural approaches and the naturopathic medical doctors will rely more on the tools of the allopathic medicine, it will be the traditional naturopathic doctors that will be holding the tradition and natural recourses as a main prominence in their practice.

On a personal level I have over thirty years of experience in functional medicine, in addition my experience includes thousands of animal autopsies, participation in human autopsy and an operation. For the past thirty years I have worked with thousands of individuals, cooperated with many local medical doctors, chiropractors, and other health care providers. From my point of view health is a straight line, at one end is perfect health at the other is disease and close to it death. As already mentioned the allopathic doctors are trained in crisis intervention, and disease. And frankly every one of us on this panel would dial 911 and demand the best cardiologist if you were to have a heart attack. The same would happen if you were in a car accident or broke your leg.

On the other hand if someone is tired, or feeling low, or not having daily elimination. The intervention in this case maybe as far away as the individual's, food choices in the

cabinet, or a refrigerator, a walk in the park or a yoga class. The best professional for these cases maybe a traditional naturopathic doctor.

And finally you have the cases between these two extremes; this is where the naturopathic medical doctors can cooperate with allopathic medical doctors.

Perhaps I am still as idealistic and full of hope now as I was forty years ago assuming and wishing that we all can work together. No one has yet convinced me otherwise. I believe human beings are at the center decent individuals and given the opportunity will work together if the egos do not get in the way.

In 2002 my seventeen year old great grand nephew contracted an infection that nearly killed him. When he arrived in St. Luke's hospital in Bethlehem, Pennsylvania we were told that he had about one hour to live. Let me assure you, that we had the best doctors who were also the most wonderful human beings I have ever met. The moment I hear those words, I turned my eyes to havens and ask God to guide me. Failure was not an option, he was in my charge, his parents were 6000 miles away. I would do everything possible to save his life. With the blessing of the chief of the infection disease department, the critical medicine doctor, and the team of surgeons I placed a team in place including a homeopathic doctor, Reiki master; massage therapist, reflexologist, and his friends had prayers taking place in several schools and on the internet. We applied homeopathic remedies through his skin, he was in coma for 3 weeks, (not induced), had 7 lung operations, later was given only organic food and medical meal shakes to eat and 2 and half months walked out of the hospital. Five months later he was again ice skating and reached his previous speed in ice hockey. As a result I was asked to speak at the hospital to the nurses, doctors, and the residents. Finally St. Luke's hospital changed their position on homeopathy and Reiki due to our experience. This was truly the magic that can happen in every hospital every day of the week if we acknowledge that we all have a gift, and talent.

In my opinion my great grandnephew lives today a normal life because we had the best surgeons, medical doctors, naturopathic coordinator (me), Reiki master, massage therapist, and prayer. It is not my intention to minimize the importance of prayer by placing it last, for all I know it may have been to the important part of this network. The network performed as one, with many movable parts, everyone checked their ego at

the door, there was only one goal – heal a person and have him walk out of the hospital to live a life beyond his 17th birthday. Today that young man is 26 years old, and living a wonderful life.

I will conclude the way I started. I believe that the HB 1717 is the first step in the right direction. In order to see the future we must remember the past. Let me remind you of the previous analogy with the driver's license. The state of Pennsylvania did not need a motor vehicle department when there were 3 cars on the main street. At that point no one needed insurance or had instructions on how to drive; it was a land of discovery. However when there are 3 cars in every driveway all of us agree that we need motor vehicle department. We also know that combining all drivers into the same category makes no sense. The same applies to the department of naturopathy.

The present day naturopathic field was built on the vision, courage, and determination of many ordinary people with extraordinary talents and curiosity. For hundreds of years people believed that nature held the secret and the solution to heal their illness. These extraordinary people never thought of themselves as healers rather facilitators of health. They knew that healing came from inside. I ask all of my esteemed colleagues to remember this fact; none of us in this room can heal anyone.

Furthermore it would be wise to remember that healing is an art and not a science as some would like to convince us of. As a scientist I know that if I pour 10 cc of HCl into 50 cc of water hundreds of times the result will be the same. That is science, a sequence of events that is predictable, repeatable, and identical each time no matter who the scientist is. On the other hand let us all imagine that we place 100 women in a row all with breast cancer or a headache, and we present them with a single medicine be it natural or pharmaceutical. Is anyone naïve enough to believe that we will receive the same results each and every time? The answer is NO! Human beings are not test tubes; they are living, energetic, dynamic states of feelings, light, waves, and particles. One woman may go home to a loving family, next to no family, next to a husband who beats her, next to children on drugs, next to a boss who demeans her, well you get my picture. We cannot apply science to human beings as we do to test tubes. Hence assuming that healing has only one mode or application or delivery system is preposterous. It would be

the same as if we insisted that every driver get a license to operate an 18 wheeler. The naturopaths of the past new that - will the naturopaths of the future remember that?

If you pass the HB 1717 as is you will in fact discard centuries of wisdom, courage, and pioneering work started by people without whose determination we would not be here. Wisdom is not equivocal to a college degree, courage is not equivocal to lobbying power and pioneers do not follow masses, they lead. I ask every one of you on this panel to become a pioneer in your own right and bring forth a bill that will be held as an example for the rest of the country to follow.

Laws are not personal but they affect people on a personal level. While I do not want to practice medicine meaning I choose not to treat diseases, I have dedicated my life helping people stay healthy and or regain their health. I rely on my science background and my common sense to help my clients to enjoy better health. It is my hope that we have all checked our egos at the door and focus on the common goal– help the people of Pennsylvania to enjoy better health.

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