



Legislative Council Staff

Research Note

Version: Final

Date: 7/13/2017

Bill Number

Senate Bill 17-106

Sponsors

***Senators Aguilar & Coram
Representative Singer***

Short Title

***Sunset Registration Of
Naturopathic Doctors***

Research Analyst

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Status

This research note reflects the final version of the bill and becomes effective August 9, 2017, assuming no referendum petition is filed.

Background

According to the Association of Accredited Naturopathic Medical Colleges, naturopathic doctors provide primary patient care that blends natural medicine with conventional diagnosis and treatment. These providers focus on treating the cause of illness, work to prevent disease whenever possible, and teach patients how to live healthy lives. Naturopathic doctors utilize nutrition, lifestyle medicine, physical medicine, and herbal therapies to treat patients.

The Naturopathic Doctor Act, enacted in 2013, requires individuals seeking to practice as a naturopathic doctor in Colorado to meet specific qualifications and register with the Director of the Division of Professions and Occupations (director) in the Department of Regulatory Agencies. In order to register as a naturopathic doctor, an applicant must, in addition to other criteria:

- be at least 21 years of age;
- have completed a four-year, graduate-level program accredited by the Council on Naturopathic Medical Education (CNME);
- pass an examination approved by the director or administered by the North American Board of Naturopathic Examiners; and
- be in good standing if licensed in another state or previously registered in Colorado.

In cases where a registered naturopathic doctor violates the act, the director is granted the authority to:

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- deny, revoke, or suspend a naturopathic doctor's registration;
- issue a letter of admonition; and
- place a registrant on probation.

Senate Action

Senate Health and Human Services Committee (February 9, 2017). At the hearing, representatives of the Colorado Pharmacists Society, Colorado Medical Society, the Colorado Academy of Family Physicians, and the Colorado Association of Naturopathic Doctors testified in support of the bill. Representatives of Colorado Citizens for Science in Medicine, Advocates for Children in Therapy, and the Colorado Association of Naturopathic Medicine testified in opposition to the bill. A representative of the Office of Policy, Research, and Regulatory Reform in the Department of Regulatory Agencies (DORA) responded to questions from the committee.

The committee adopted severed section A of amendment L.001 and amendment L.002, and referred the bill, as amended, to the Senate Committee of the Whole. Severed section A of amendment L.001 set the next sunset date for the program in 2020. Amendment L.002 made technical changes to the bill.

Senate second reading (February 22, 2017). The Senate adopted the Senate Health and Human Services Committee report and amendments No. 2 and No. 3. Amendment No. 2 made a technical change, and amendment No. 3 clarified that naturopathic doctors registered with the director may use the title "registered naturopathic doctor" or "registered doctor of naturopathy" and the initials R.N.D. The Senate passed the bill on second reading, as amended.

Senate third reading (February 23, 2017). The Senate passed the bill on third reading with no amendments.

House Action

House Public Health Care and Human Services Committee (March 16, 2017). At the hearing, representatives of the Colorado Pharmacists Society, Colorado Medical Society, the Colorado Academy of Family Physicians, the Colorado Association of Naturopathic Doctors and seven members of the public testified in support of the bill. Representatives of Advocates for Children in Therapy, the Colorado Association of Naturopathic Medicine, and one member of the public testified in opposition to the bill. Representatives of DORA and Legislative Council Staff responded to questions from the committee. The committee adopted amendments L.010, L.011, and L.015, and referred the bill to the Committee of the Whole, as amended.

Amendment L.010 expanded the scope of practice for naturopathic doctors by allowing them to obtain and administer certain vitamins, minerals, amino acids, and chelating agents. Amendment L.011 established a 2022 sunset date for the registration program, and clarified that naturopathic doctors registered with the director may use the title "naturopathic doctor" or "doctor of naturopathy," and the initials "N.D." Amendment L.015 expanded the scope of practice for naturopathic doctors by allowing them to obtain, administer, dispense, and prescribe certain hormones.

House second reading (February 23, 2017). The House adopted the House Public Health Care and Human Services Committee report and amendment No. 2. Amendment No. 2:

- clarified that naturopathic doctors may obtain and administer only certain vitamins, minerals, and amino acids;

- required that naturopathic doctors may obtain, administer, dispense, and prescribe certain hormones in conjunction with a collaborative agreement with a Colorado-licensed primary care physician or advanced practice nurse with prescriptive authority; and
- clarified the liability of the licensed medical professionals and naturopathic doctors as it relates to collaborative agreements.

The House passed the bill on second reading, as amended.

House third reading (March 24, 2017). The House passed the bill on third reading with no amendments.

Conference Committee

First conference committee (April 11, 2017). The Senate did not concur in amendments made by the House, and a conference committee was formed. The committee adopted a report to adopt the rerevised version of the bill with an additional amendment requiring naturopathic doctors, who are initially registering with the Division of Professions and Occupations or renewing a registration, to complete at least seven hours of education in intravenous nutrition therapies.

House action (April 13, 2017). The House adopted the first report of the first conference committee and repassed the bill.

Senate action (April 19, 2017). The Senate adhered to the reengrossed version of the bill.

House action (May 2, 2017). The House receded; therefore, the reengrossed version of the bill was enacted.

Relevant Research

- *2016 Sunset Review: Naturopathic Doctor Act*, Office of Policy, Research, and Regulatory Reform, Colorado Department of Regulatory Agencies, - <https://tinyurl.com/jju9lyo>.