



Good morning. My name is Darryl Koch. I am a resident and licensed, practicing Chiropractic Physician of Essex, VT. I have been in Chiropractic practice for 17 years-10 here in VT.

Thank you for having me here today to introduce or re-introduce you to the Vermont Chiropractic Association.

The Vermont Chiropractic Association represents 90 of the 193 actively licensed Chiropractic Physicians in the state.

In Vermont and the vast majority of states and in the federal Medical program, Chiropractic Physicians are licensed to diagnose and treat neuromusculoskeletal conditions without the use of drugs and surgery. The essential services provided by Chiropractic Physicians are also covered benefits in the federal health delivery systems, including those administered by Medicaid, the US Departments of Veterans Affairs and Defense, Federal Employees Health Benefits Program, Federal Workers' Compensation, and all state workers' compensations programs.

Chiropractors are educated in nationally accredited, four-year doctoral graduate school programs. Most chiropractic colleges require a four-year undergraduate degree and all require the traditional pre-medical requirements prior to entry. The doctoral program includes a minimum of 4200 hours of classroom, laboratory, and clinical internship, with the average Chiropractic Physicians program equivalent in classroom hours to traditional MD and DO medical school programs.

Chiropractic Physicians provide a patient-centered, whole person approach to healthcare marked by meaningful interaction and communication. This care results in consistently high patient satisfaction ratings.

With prescription pain drug abuse now classified as an epidemic in the United States and identified as a priority by both the Governor and legislature, and the number of spinal fusion surgeries soaring 500 percent over the last decade, the essential services provided by Chiropractic Physicians represent a safe and effective primary care approach for the prevention, diagnosis, and conservative management of back pain and spinal disorders that can often enable patients to reduce or avoid the need for these riskier treatments.

Chiropractic care is mainstream health care. We have made tremendous strides in collaborating and integrating with other health care providers in order to provide the best care possible to our patients. We have used science, research and data to counter biases that have lead to discrimination against our profession in the past.

The VCA has one major goal this legislative session: pass legislation to ensure that insurance companies pay chiropractors fairly. Currently, some insurance companies



reimburse chiropractic physicians less than they reimburse other physicians for providing the same quality service. The law we are proposing would require that all insurance companies pay chiropractic physicians the same amount as they pay other physicians for providing the same quality service. This is a simple issue of fairness. Fair reimbursement for chiropractic physicians will help to ensure that patients continue to have meaningful choice of provider in the health care marketplace.

What we are proposing is similar to a law that you passed last year relating to parity in reimbursement between optometrists and ophthalmologists. What we are proposing is also the law in at least two other states, Washington and Nevada.

There are common legal definitions for each procedure that Chiropractic Physicians and Medical Physicians perform called CPT codes. We are not looking to expand the number of CPT codes that we can legally perform but simply be reimbursed equally for the same CPT codes performed. We are required to perform the exact same service, but currently do not get reimbursed the same by some payers.

Thank you very much for your time and I am happy to take any questions you may have.