



AOASM

AMERICAN OSTEOPATHIC ACADEMY OF SPORTS MEDICINE

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December 8, 2009

The Honorable Arnold Schwarzenegger
Governor, State of California
State Capitol
Sacramento, CA 95814

Dear Governor Schwarzenegger,

As president of American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine (AOASM), I am writing on behalf of our osteopathic physician and surgeon members licensed in California AND our osteopathic physician and surgeon members licensed in the other states. We are extremely concerned regarding the impending legislature AB X4 20 which calls for the merger of the Bureau of Naturopathic Medicine (henceforth known as a Committee of Naturopathic Medicine) with the Osteopathic Medical Board of California (OMBC). This merger leads to both a safety and a validity issue.

OBMC was established to oversee the licensure application of osteopathic physicians and address patient complaints regarding treatments by osteopathic physicians. For the safety of Californians, this is a very important task. Having the OBMC oversee two different professions makes this task more arduous and compromises the safety of Californians. One, the volume of work will slow down the process. But, secondly, since osteopathic and naturopathic physicians are trained in very different ways with very different philosophies, the integration of naturopath committee with the osteopathic board will compromise the osteopathic profession's ability to regulate its physicians in a way that will best serve the safety, health and welfare of patients.

According to California state law, osteopathic physicians have full rights and privileges equivalent to allopathic medical doctors. Naturopaths do not. Osteopaths can prescribe medications, perform surgery, and specialize in any field of medicine. Naturopaths can not. Therefore, we are gravely concerned that a naturopath as a member of OBMC will sit in judgment of an osteopathic physician.

In addition, the merger of the two boards is likely to mislead the public by implying that naturopaths are qualified in the unlimited practice of medicine and that naturopaths are educated, trained and credentialed the same way as an osteopath.

We strongly urge you to maintain the Bureau of Naturopathic Medicine as an entity separate and distinct from the Osteopathic Medical Board of California.

Sincerely,

Michele Gilsenan, DO, FAOASM
President
American Osteopathic Academy of Sports Medicine