Aloha, Chair Ige and members of the Senate Committee on Health. Thank you for this opportunity to testify on SCR 123 and SR 53, affecting naturopathy.

The University of Hawai‘i at Manoa’s John A. Burns School of Medicine is compelled to express that we see a number of potential dangers in the law governing neuropathy passed last session and now referred to as Act 22.

The act redefined “naturopathic medicine” to include a number of clinical and therapeutic practices that naturopaths did not previously have, including:

1. Office procedures (suturing etc…);
2. Legend medications prescriptions (Rx only meds);
3. Ordering and reading of images (including pet scanners, CT scanning etc…); and
4. Administering drugs via parenteral (inject or IV) route.

Act 22 allowed unrestricted practice of medicine to providers with incomplete training and we believe it requires steps to mitigate its potential harmful impact.

For background, Act 22 also requires that the changes it contained not occur until the Board of Naturopathy adopted rules regarding the above practices. Because the Board forbids parenteral injections currently, these two new measures (SR53, SCR123) are apparently intended to press the board to create this opportunity. We respectfully suggest that the Legislature, which created the Board, not direct the Board in its responsibility to protect the public in this area.

We prefer instead you consider two other measures directly related, but currently awaiting public hearings to be scheduled. They include SB 2489, which basically deletes language relating to parenteral meds, procedures and legend drugs from the
previous statue. We prefer SB 2489 for the safety of Hawai‘i’s citizens and the promotion of better medical practices. Another bill, HB2312 HD2, has been considered by a House committee and is before a Senate Health committee awaiting a hearing. It would create a formulary committee with a majority of pharmacists and MDs to review and update a limited formulary every 2 years, an approach we prefer as “second best” to SB 2489.

Mahalo for this opportunity to offer guidance.