

President and Vice President of the California Medical Board
2005 Evergreen St., Suite 1200
Sacramento, CA 95815

June 3, 2019

Dear Ms. Pines and Dr. Lewis,

I am writing this letter in support of Dr. Corinne Basch as my primary care provider. I have been a patient of Dr. Basch for several years. I am 60 years old and of good health, but have moderate discomfort due to osteoarthritis, particularly in the hips. I appreciate the attention she gives to my health issues and the fact that she provides me with information about treatment alternatives. We work together to come up with a suitable approach that takes into consideration my preference to avoid hip replacement as long as possible and to minimize the use of over-the-counter and prescription drugs. I find the written Visit Summary she provides very valuable. It includes Recommendations and Orders, any Tests or Prescriptions and a Summary of Recent Issues, current medications, and select diagnostic test results.

I have been to a handful of doctors, physician assistants, and nurse practitioners in Eureka, Arcata, McKinleyville over my 20 years of residence in Humboldt County. I found Dr. Basch to be knowledgeable of a wide range of health issues and alternative treatments. Contrary to the usual impersonal, assembly-line style of many doctors who are overloaded with patients and paperwork, Dr. Basch's compassion gives the patient a feeling that they are valued as a person and merit her full attention.

During a recent flare-up, I was pleased with the pain relief I experienced after Dr. Basch's treatment using acupuncture with low-level electrical stimulation in my sacro-iliac/hip areas. Luckily, a series of two treatments reduced my pain level so that I could pursue an exercise program that has allowed me to return to walking, swimming, boating, gardening, and light hiking.

I know of people who are less fortunate than me in that they have a high level of pain that doesn't respond to simple treatments. Those people were prescribed opioid drugs by different doctors with the goal of reducing pain to a level that could support a decent quality of life.

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Another person I worked with was a very active ██████████ who also experienced excruciating back pain after an injury. He was prescribed a medication to attenuate his pain after back surgery failed to provide relief. His doctor was tapering him off of that medication, but the drug side-effects and pain levels were such that this very healthy, vigorous man took his own life. While we know using opioids and other pain medications for extended periods is not ideal, it seems there is a risk of suicide for some patients when efforts are made to taper them off certain medications. I can imagine that compassionate doctors would not want to shoulder the heavy burden of knowing a patient under their care took his or her own life.

Humboldt County has a major shortage of doctors and other health care practitioners. If Dr. Basch was not allowed to practice, we would lose an extraordinary doctor. She is the only doctor I know of that focuses on pain management and is willing to take on patients that other doctors feel are too difficult or risky because of their use of pain medications. I have never observed or heard of Dr. Basch having unprofessional conduct or being negligent. I believe Dr. Basch endeavors to provide the best care possible to her patients. If she could no longer practice here, a substantial number of Dr. Basch's patients pain would be denied access to local medical care for addressing their pain issues.

Based on the service Dr. Basch provides for this community, I ask that you consider an alternative to revoking or suspending her medical license. I really hope the Medical Board could come up with course of action that would provide a pathway for correcting any behaviors that resulted in this Accusation while allowing Dr. Basch to continue her medical practice. There are a large number of people in this county that rely on compassionate doctors such as Dr. Basch to provide us with tools we need to maintain healthy and productive lives.

A recent Humboldt County Department of Health and Human Services report that states that "...Humboldt rates for nearly all of the leading causes of death are 2 to 3 times that of the state." (Eureka Times-Standard, 5/30/2019). Based on the challenges of this remote, rural area and the lack of access to sufficient health care, we can't afford to lose another doctor!

Sincerely,

