



Board for
Certification of
Nutrition
Specialists™

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Board for Certification of Nutrition Specialists
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March 25, 2025

Chairman Patterson
Senate Committee Health Care
Oregon Senate

Dear Chairwoman Patterson and Members of the Committee,

I am writing to encourage support for Senate Bill 1174 (SB 1174), which seeks to establish a clear pathway to licensure for Certified Nutrition Specialists in Oregon. Crucially, the proposed amendments to Section 36 allow those CNSs licensed in Oregon to keep their license to practice.

As the Senior Director of Advocacy of The Board for Certification of Nutrition Specialists (BCNS), I represent a diverse group of nutrition professionals, specifically Certified Nutrition Specialists (CNSs), who provide personalized, evidence-based medical nutrition therapy to improve the health and well-being of Oregonians.

Who Are Certified Nutrition Specialists (CNSs)?

Certified Nutrition Specialists are highly trained nutrition professionals who specialize in the science and practice of medical nutrition therapy. They hold advanced degrees and have undergone rigorous training to address complex health issues through targeted nutritional interventions.

Qualifications of CNSs:

To earn the CNS credential, an individual must:

- **Educational Requirements:** Obtain a master's or doctoral degree in nutrition or a related field from an accredited institution.
- **Supervised Practice:** Complete a minimum of 1,000 hours of supervised clinical experience, focusing on various aspects of nutrition care.
- **Examination:** Pass the Certified Nutrition Specialist examination administered by the Board for Certification of Nutrition Specialists (BCNS).
- **Continuing Education:** Engage in ongoing professional development to maintain certification and stay abreast of the latest research and practices in nutrition science.

Roles and Responsibilities of CNSs:

Certified Nutrition Specialists are equipped to:

- **Conduct Comprehensive Assessments:** Evaluate an individual's nutritional status and health needs through detailed assessments.
- **Develop Personalized Nutrition Plans:** Create tailored nutrition strategies to prevent and manage chronic diseases such as diabetes, cardiovascular conditions, and gastrointestinal disorders.
- **Provide Counseling and Education:** Offer guidance and support to help individuals implement and maintain effective dietary changes.
- **Collaborate with Healthcare Teams:** Work alongside other healthcare providers to ensure integrated and comprehensive patient care.

Support for SB 1174:

SB 1174 aligns with the BCNS's mission to advance personalized nutrition and recognize the critical role of nutrition professionals in improving public health. By modernizing state regulations and clarifying licensure and the scope of practice for licensed nutrition professionals, this bill will help address the growing burden of chronic disease and health access disparities across Oregon.

We commend you and others sponsoring this bill for prioritizing nutrition in healthcare and urge the passage of SB 1174. By doing so, Oregon can join other states that are integrating nutrition as a cornerstone of preventive and therapeutic healthcare, empowering individuals to achieve better health outcomes through personalized nutrition care.

It is also important to note that this bill does not restrict the broader field of nutrition care. Wellness practitioners, health coaches, and other nutrition professionals can still provide individualized, non-medical nutrition therapy guidance and primary disease prevention support without a license. However, for public safety, medical nutrition therapy—the treatment of diagnosed conditions through medical nutrition interventions—should be provided by licensed practitioners.

The Board of Certified Nutrition Specialists stands ready to support this initiative and collaborate with policymakers, healthcare providers, and community leaders to ensure the successful implementation of SB 1174.

I urge the committee to recommend this bill favorably to the Senate to enhance and clarify the quality and accessibility of nutrition care in Oregon. Clearly recognizing and licensing the Certified Nutrition Specialist will validate their expertise and provide

Oregonians greater access to qualified nutrition professionals dedicated to improving health outcomes through nutrition.

Thank you for allowing my testimony.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Amy Smith". The script is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Amy" and last name "Smith" clearly distinguishable.

Amy Smith, MS, CNS, LDN

Senior Director of Nutrition Programs and Advocacy - BCNS