

March 24, 2025  
RE: SB1174

Dear Senate Health Committee

Thank you, Chair Patterson and the other members of this Committee. I appreciate being able to give testimony on SB1174 and urge you to support this bill.

My name is Liz Lipski. I'm writing this testimony on my own behalf, and for the current and future Certified Nutrition Specialists (CNSs) who live in Oregon.

I'm a Certified Nutrition Specialist (CNS) and hold a PhD in Clinical Nutrition. I have been licensed as a Licensed Dietitian Nutritionist (LDN) in Maryland since 2013. I am a retired Professor and created and directed a doctoral program in Clinical Nutrition at Maryland University of Integrative Health. I have done clinical work as a nutritionist for 45 years. I currently train physicians and other medical professionals as part of the faculties at the Institute for Functional Medicine, and for the American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine in their Integrative Medicine Fellowship program. I mentor other nutrition professionals, RDs and CNSs alike.

I'm well qualified, but even though I've lived in Oregon for 8 years, I never applied because I thought I'd be denied. Our current law states that I can be licensed by reciprocity IF state statutes are similar. The statutes are not currently similar. I am licensed in Maryland where CNS's and RD's are automatically licensed together as Licensed Dietitian Nutritionists (LDN). So, I never applied.

Until October 2024, when I heard that the 12 CNSs who are licensed in Oregon received letters telling them that their licenses might be revoked, I didn't realize that any of us had been licensed. If I had, I would have applied when I moved here.

The Oregon statute was originally written in 1989 when RDs were the only credible nutrition professionals. In Portland, we have two universities that have nutrition programs (MS and DCN) that lead to the CNS. CNS's have a minimum of a master's degree in nutrition, take a national board certification exam and complete a supervised-practice of 1000 hours. CNSs are currently recognized in 21 states and can legally practice in 45 states. Along with RDs, CNSs are the only other nutrition professionals to be mentioned in the US Bureau of Labor Statistics and in Medicare standards.

SB1174 allows for separate pathways for both CNSs and RDs to be licensed. CNSs will be licensed as Licensed Nutritionists and RDs will be licensed as Licensed Dietitians. Both fields specialize in Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT). MNT is the application of nutrition for the prevention and modulation of disease. So, if an RD or CNS works with someone who has diabetes, teaching them how to use a continuous glucose monitor, modifying their diet, or adding supportive nutritional supplements, he/she is providing MNT. They use the patient's labs and work in conjunction with their physician to ensure that patients are getting the best care and results possible.

SB1174 does not deny anyone the right to provide nutrition education, nutrition coaching, or to sell nutritional supplements. We want everyone with training in nutrition to be able to use it at the highest level of their training. Licensing only restricts the use of MNT.

We have support for this bill from the Oregon Authority Board of Licensed Dietitians, the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the Board for Certification for Nutrition Specialists, and the American Nutrition Association. We have been working alongside the dietetic institutions nationally and in Oregon on this bill and don't expect opposition.

If this statute is changed, what does this mean for me personally? I'd apply for a license immediately.

What does this mean for Oregon? Currently, there are about 1200 licensed Dietitians and 12 CNS's in Oregon. According to a job survey published in 2021 in the Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (1), 8% of RDs work in private practice. Nearly all the rest work in hospitals, dialysis units, specifically in diabetes care, WIC programs, long-term care facilities, school lunch programs, and community programs. This leaves 96 RD's left to serve the rest of us, people who are walking around and have health issues. What about the woman who is going through menopause, or someone who is getting treated for cancer or post-cancer treatment, or hypertension or cardiovascular disease or auto-immune disease or children with special needs?

We need more licensed nutrition professionals in Oregon, not fewer.

Please support us on SB1174.

Thank you. If you have any questions or concerns, please let me know.

my best,

Liz Lipski, PhD, CNS, FACN, BCHN, IFMCP, LDN

Reference: (1) Compensation and Benefits Survey 2021. Dosedel, Erik. Journal of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, Volume 121, Issue 11, 2314 – 2331. [https://www.jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672\(21\)01258-2/fulltext](https://www.jandonline.org/article/S2212-2672(21)01258-2/fulltext)