Hello Chair Patterson & the Senate Committee on Health Care,

Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony in support of SB1174.

My name is Sierra Thompson Nordquist, and I represent myself and other Certified Nutrition Specialists (CNS) and CNS-Candidates in Oregon. I urge your support for SB1174, which establishes a clear pathway to licensure for Certified Nutrition Specialists in our state.

Certified Nutrition Specialists commit to completion of rigorous education standards in order to practice medical nutrition therapy. We must complete both a Bachelor's of Science degree and a Master's of Science degree in advanced nutritional education along with completion of 1000 clinically supervised hours and pass a qualifying board-level exam in order to obtain the CNS credential. This level of education is equivalent to that of Registered Dietitians (RD); it ensures our ability to understand complex nutritional biochemistry and effectively support clients and their clinicians with their nutritional care.

I have been a nutritional health practitioner for going on 10 years and will soon be credentialed as a Certified Nutrition Specialist. Passing SB1174 will allow me to bill insurance upon receipt of my CNS credential, increasing access to nutrition care for more Oregonians who currently must pay out-of-pocket for non-RD nutritional services. Furthermore, creating a path to licensure for Certified Nutrition Specialists will enhance Oregon's ability to nurture their residence's health through preventative care via nutritional education and medical nutrition therapy and will increase confidence in the nutrition professionals conducting this level of care.

Supporting SB1174 will not only enhance accessibility to nutrition care, but also provide an alternative path to licensure for highly skilled nutrition practitioners who have pursued many years of higher education in nutrition outside of the RD educational pathway. I urge you to support SB1174.

Sincerely with appreciation,

Sierra T. Nordquist, M.S., CNS-Candidate