



Proponent Testimony (In Person)

Ohio Senate Health Committee Hearing RE: SB 211 – Dietitian Licensure Compact

Date 4/24/24

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Chairman Huffman, Vice Chair Johnson, Ranking Member Antonio, and members of the Senate Health Committee, my name is Kay Mavko and I am appearing before you today on behalf of the Ohio Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (OAND) as a Proponent of SB 211 - Dietitian Licensure Compact bill. We are grateful to Senator Roegner for her leadership in sponsoring this legislation for Dietitians.

Our professional association advocates for issues that support the Dietitian workforce and that protect and enhance nutritional health and well-being. We believe that Ohio participating in the Dietitian Licensure Compact as proposed in SB 211 will;

- Provide licensed dietitians with opportunities for multistate practice,
- Ease mobility for individuals who are relocating (especially Military families),
- Improve public safety,
- Expand consumer access to highly qualified practitioners and
- Promote workforce development by reducing unnecessary licensure burdens.

The Ohio Legislature has recognized the benefits that Licensure Compacts can provide as demonstrated by enactment of compact legislation for other Ohio health professionals including Physicians, Nurses, Physical Therapists, Occupational Therapists, Psychologists, Counselors, etc. We hope that the Senate Health Committee will help dietitians participate in those same benefits.

The Dietitian Compact model proposed in SB211 was created through a collaborative agreement between the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, the Department of Defense, and the Counsel of State Governments National Center for Interstate Licensure Compacts. An advisory group of stakeholders including dietitians, legislators, regulatory boards, and educators met for over 18 months to craft a compact model that will work for our profession. Senator Roegner, her Legislative Aide Ryan Culross and four Ohio dietitians participated in the advisory group and shared their expertise.

The Dietitian Compact will enable dietitians who hold an unencumbered license in a participating home state to apply for compact privileges to practice in other states that join the compact - rather than get an individual license in every state where they want to practice.

Compact member states agree to mutually recognize the licenses and compact privileges issued by all member states. This arrangement ensures that dietitians follow the laws and rules of the home state where they are licensed as well as the laws and rules of each state where

they practice using compact privileges. The State Medical Board of Ohio maintains jurisdiction over anyone practicing dietetics within our borders and will continue to protect public health and safety within the existing regulatory structure.

All states seeking to join the Dietitian Compact must require background checks for applicants, and adhere to defined eligibility standards for dietitian education, preprofessional experience, examinations, and continuing education. Ohio already has these requirements in our licensure law. The Dietitian Compact does not change any eligibility requirements for licensure in force in Ohio. All other states that license or certify dietetic practice also meet these same standards and will be eligible to join the Dietitian Compact, so we anticipate that the compact membership will grow quickly. Five states that currently have no state regulation will not be able to join the compact.

Like the other occupational licensing compacts, the Dietitian Compact will be administered by a commission that includes one delegate from each of the member states. Ohio's delegate will be a representative from the State Medical Board of Ohio. The Compact Commission will not begin operations until at least seven states have enacted legislation.

In January Ohio was the first state in the U.S. to introduce Dietitian Compact legislation, and ten other states quickly followed suit. Nebraska has already introduced and recently passed their compact bill and is now the first state to be eligible to participate on the Compact Commission. If Ohio can enact SB211 during the current legislative session we would also have a seat at the table when the Compact Commission starts to meet and establishes rules, fees, and bylaws.

Each compact member state can charge a fee for compact privileges issued. The Compact Commission will also charge a fee when each privilege is issued. We anticipate that both fees will be established in a manner that encourages participation in the compact and provides adequate income for Compact operations. There will be some additional costs associated with development of an interstate data system, and travel for Ohio's delegate to attend annual Compact Commission meetings. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics has indicated that they will assist with funding development of the data system. So overall, costs for Ohio to participate should not be substantial.

The Ohio Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics respectfully requests that you support Ohio's participation in the Dietitian Compact by approving SB 211 - The Dietitian Licensure Compact legislation that is before this committee.

I sincerely appreciate the opportunity to appear before the Health Committee today and will gladly answer any questions you may have.

Thank you.

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