

VERMONT ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

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Dear Committee Chair Black and Vice Chair McFaun

We are writing to you in your roles as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Vermont House Committee on Health Care.

The letter is signed by 120 registered dietitians living and working in Vermont, including all current members of the Board of the Vermont Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

We respectfully urge your committee to take up **House Bill 296** early in the session. This bill, entitled **An act relating to Vermont's adoption of the Dietician Licensure Compact** was introduced by Representatives Brian Minier, Matthew Birong, and Lisa Hango in 2025.

Passage of this legislation would make it possible for Vermont registered dietitians to participate in the interstate licensure compact for dietitians, which is now in the development stage. Legislation has been passed in 15 states, and is currently under consideration in 12 other states. We expect compact privileges to begin being issued by late 2026 or 2027.

Registered Dietitians are food and nutrition experts with a minimum of a graduate degree from an accredited dietetics program and who complete a supervised practice requirement, pass a national exam and continue professional development throughout their careers. Currently, there are approximately 250 registered dietitians living and practicing in Vermont. Our members assist Vermonters at every stage of life. We help people manage chronic illnesses such as diabetes, and heart disease. We support women through pregnancy and breastfeeding, and assist children with typical development as well as those with complex medical needs. Our group includes specialists in the nutritional care of eating disorders, transplant candidates, and people with gastrointestinal illnesses.

The Vermont legislature has previously passed compact legislation for seven other health care professions: medicine, nursing, occupational therapy, physical therapy, psychology, counseling and social work. There are many advantages to compact legislation:

Benefits for Practitioners:

- Facilitates mobility for licensees.
- Expands employment opportunities into new markets.
- Eases the burden of applying for and maintaining multiple licenses.
- Supports relocating military spouses and families.
- Improves continuity of care.

Benefits for Patients:

- Allows for continuity of care when a patient leaves Vermont for school, work, family obligations or travel.

Benefits for the Vermont Secretary of State Office of Professional Regulation:

- Creates a compact information system that supports the facilitation of licensure and discipline information for dietitians.
- Expands cooperation among state licensure boards on investigations and disputes.
- Allows regulators to retain jurisdiction over licensees practicing in their state.

Benefits for the State of Vermont

- Promotes workforce development and strengthens labor markets.
- Expands consumer access to highly qualified practitioners.
- Enhances public safety through a shared interstate data system of licensure and disciplinary information, allowing for rapid verification of licensure status and cooperation among states.
- Preserves state sovereignty.

When your committee takes up this bill, we have members who are available and eager to speak with you about how this bill will affect their professional practice and their ability to serve Vermonters who leave the state for school, work, and other reasons.

Sincerely,

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