

CSG Testimony on LD416 – Dietitians Licensure Compact

Health Coverage, Insurance, and Financial Services

March 5th, 2025

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Members of the committee, I would like to express my appreciation for your consideration of the Dietitian Licensure Compact. My name is Kaitlyn Bison with The Council of State Governments. My written testimony is meant to provide background educational information on the compact.

The Council of State Governments is a nonpartisan membership association for elected and appointed state government officials from all three branches. CSG, through its National Center for Interstate Compacts, has facilitated the development process for all eighteen of the active occupational licensing compacts, including the ten that Maine is a member of (ASLP, counseling, dentistry, nursing, occupational therapy, PA, psychology, physical therapy, social work, and medicine).

There are approximately 111,000 licensed dietitians in the United States. Licensees are currently limited to providing services within state borders. The Dietitian Licensure Compact seeks to provide licensees with opportunities for multistate practice, support relocating practitioners, and foster workforce development by reducing unnecessary licensure burdens.

The compact was created through a cooperative agreement between the Department of Defense and The Council of State Governments. For 18 months, CSG developed the compact language with stakeholders within the profession from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, dietitian regulatory boards, and industry-leading practitioners. The compact language was finalized in October 2023.

The Dietitians Licensure Compact is an interstate compact, or a contract among states, allowing dietitians licensed in a compact member state to practice in other compact member states without the need for multiple licenses. The Dietitian Licensure Compact is similar in form and function to the ten other occupational licensing compacts that Maine is already a member of. A dietitian must hold an active, unencumbered license in their home state to be eligible for the compact. Licensees must also pass a background check and meet other eligibility requirements related to education and examinations.

From a regulatory perspective, the Compact preserves the authority of each compact member state to protect public health and safety through the existing state regulatory



structure. A licensee practicing under a compact privilege must abide by the laws, regulations and rules that govern the practice of dietetics in the state in which they are located. The Maine Board of Licensing of Dietetic Practice has jurisdiction over anyone practicing in Maine under a compact privilege.

The Dietitians Compact also benefits military families. If a military family gets assigned to a new duty station in a compact member state, the service member or their spouse can continue to work with their current multistate license.

Like all of the other occupational licensing compacts, the Dietitian Licensure Compact will be governed by a commission made up of the member states. The delegate will be a representative from the Maine Board of Licensing of Dietetic Practice.

The compact will come into effect once it's enacted by seven states. If enacted in Maine, Maine would have a seat at the table when the compact commission has its first meeting to establish the compact's rules and bylaws.

Overall, the Dietitian Licensure Compact will increase license portability for licensed dietitians in Maine, support military families, and improve access to dietetics services for Maine residents, while maintaining the current system of state licensure. Additionally, by ensuring the sharing of investigative and disciplinary information among participating states, the Dietitian Licensure Compact will allow participating state regulatory entities to better protect the public.