

ASSEMBLY CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND REGULATED
PROFESSIONS COMMITTEE

STATEMENT TO

ASSEMBLY, No. 2826

with committee amendments

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

DATED: MAY 12, 1997

The Assembly Consumer Affairs and Regulated Professions Committee reports favorably and with committee amendments, Assembly Bill No. 2826.

As amended, this bill provides for the licensure of nutritionists and dietitians and establishes a Nutritionists Examining Committee under the State Board of Medical Examiners in the Division of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Law and Public Safety to oversee their licensure. The committee is to consist of five licensed nutritionists and a physician.

To be eligible for licensure as a nutritionist, dietitian, or both, an applicant must be at least 18 years old and fulfill the following requirements:

- a. Have received a baccalaureate or higher academic degree from a regionally accredited college or university with a minimum of 15 credits or a major in human nutrition, foods and nutrition, food systems management, nutritional science, nutrition education, or related courses approved by the board, and have successfully completed a minimum of 900 hours, within a two-year period, in one of the following: a nutrition practice under the supervision of a nutritionist licensed in this State or licensed, registered or certified by a governmental agency in any other state having requirements for licensure, registration or certification substantially similar to licensure requirements in this State; under the supervision of a physician with expertise in human nutrition; or in a recognized practice program; and
- b. Pass an examination administered or approved by the board, after consultation with the committee. The board shall offer two examinations, one to qualify persons as a licensed nutritionist and one to qualify persons as both a licensed nutritionist and a licensed dietitian.

The bill provides that no person may practice nutrition in this State, with or without compensation, unless that person holds a valid license. Those exempt from this prohibition are: licensed professionals and certified teachers who are practicing or teaching within the scope

of their license or certificate; students enrolled in schools recognized by the board who are performing that which is necessary to their course of study; federal government employees practicing nutrition within the scope of their official duties; persons who do not hold themselves out to be nutritionists while furnishing general nutritional information as to the use of food or food products including dietary supplements; and persons working in a licensed hospital, licensed long term health care facility, or State institution or facility performing those duties that are required in the course of that person's employment.

For a period of one year after the effective date of the bill, a person who is practicing or residing in the State on the effective date of the bill may qualify as a licensed dietitian, a licensed nutritionist, or both, if that person is at least 18 years of age, has met the educational standards established by the bill and has been employed in the field of nutrition for three of the last 10 years. The bill also provides for the licensure by the board by endorsement to nutritionists who have been licensed, registered or certified in another state with standards substantially equivalent to those of this State.

Under the bill, "nutrition" is the integration and application of principles derived from the science of nutrition, biochemistry, physiology, food, food management and from behavioral and social sciences to achieve and maintain a healthy human status. It includes the provision of nutrition care as follows: assessing the nutritional needs of individuals and groups, and determining resources and constraints; establishing priorities, goals, and objectives that meet nutritional needs and are consistent with available resources and constraints; providing nutritional counseling in health and disease; developing, implementing and managing nutrition care systems; evaluating, making changes in and maintaining appropriate standards of quality in food and nutrition services; and establishing appropriate care plans for normal and therapeutic nutrition services.

The uniform procedures and enforcement law for licensing boards, P.L.1978, c.73 (C.45:1-14 et seq.) applies to the provisions of the bill.

The committee adopted amendments providing for the establishment of a Nutritionists Examining Committee under the State Board of Medical Examiners to oversee the licensure of nutritionists and dietitians. The amendments eliminate provisions in the bill for the establishment of a State Board of Nutritionists in the Division of Consumer Affairs in the Department of Law and Public Safety.