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January 19, 2006

Dear SJR35 Board Subcommittee Members,

As the President of the Montana Dietetic Association and on behalf of its membership, I would like to encourage you to retain licensure of Nutritionists.

The provision of nutrition services and information which is both sound and science-based is important to the health of Montana citizens. Licensure of nutrition professionals was established to protect the public health, safety, and welfare, to ensure that nutritional services of high quality are available to the people of Montana, and to provide a means of identifying those qualified to practice nutrition.

Nutrition practices can have a life-long impact on health and quality of life. Impaired health can be debilitating and life threatening. It can also result in high medical costs to the individual, health insurance industry, Medicaid and Medicare.

Quality nutrition services will take on greater and greater importance as the population of Montana ages, as does the population of the US. Qualified nutrition professionals will be relied on in as a team member in the prevention and treatment of nutrition-related chronic diseases such as diabetes, obesity, heart disease, hypertension and stroke.

Quality nutrition services are not only important to an older population, they are important to a younger population, even a pre-conceptual population. Research has been conducted on nutrition during pregnancy and later life chronic disease of the child.

Licensed Nutritionists have a background in nutrition and the supporting sciences such as microbiology and biochemistry which provides them with the skills to interpret research and scientific information to formulate concepts in and recommendations for nutrition practices to better the health of Montanans.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Chris Fogelman".

Chris Fogelman, RD MPH
President
Montana Dietetic Association

Economic Affairs Committee Meeting
February 10, 2006

Exhibit #16