



## Bills of Interest in the 87th Texas Legislature

### ***Bills that align with the TX Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics Public Policy Priorities***

**Prepared for 2021 Virtual Advocacy Day Attendees (NOT FOR LEGISLATORS)**

<p><b>PROTECTION OF DIETITIAN LICENSURE AND LICENSE INTEGRITY</b>  <i>Dietitian licensure oversight is currently well-handled by the Texas Department of Licensing &amp; Regulation. We support bills that allow for continuation of the oversight role and function of TDLR for programs transferred since 2016 (including the Dietitian’s Licensing Program).</i></p>		
HB 1560	Goldman	<p>“Sunset Bills” - strike language in current law that called for a Sunset review in the short term for licensing programs that transferred to TDLR since 2016. They preserve and extend the Dietitian Licensing program to 2033.            Status (4/21) - in Calendars Committee</p>
SB 714	Buckingham	
<p><b>TELEMEDICINE / TELEHEALTH EXPANSION</b>  <i>We support bills that authorize the use of telemedicine/telehealth for nutrition care services, that require health plans to reimburse under the same coverage and payment policies as in-person care, and that establish a plan for broadband expansion.</i></p>		
HB 4	Price	<p>Would make permanent the COVID-19 waivers allowing telemedicine/telehealth to be used in the Medicaid, CHIP, and other HHSC public health programs. Expressly authorize telehealth for nutrition counseling in these programs.            Status (4/21) - HB 4 passed the House; SB 412 heard in Committee, left pending</p>
SB 412	Buckingham	
SB 40	Zaffarini	<p>Authorizes licensees regulated by TDLR, including dietitians, to provide services via telehealth under uniform rules and standards to be developed by TDLR            Status (4/21) - passed Senate and referred to House Public Health Committee</p>
HB 5	Ashby	<p>Establish a statewide broadband office to identify gaps, develop a strategic plan, and secure funding. Stem from recognition that broadband expansion is essential to realizing the full potential of telemedicine and telehealth.            Status (4/21) - HB 5 passed full House; SB 5 voted out of Senate Committee</p>
SB 5	Nichols	
HB 980	Fierro	<p>Requires health plans to reimburse preferred or contracted health professionals for a covered service at the same rate as in-person services.</p>
<p><b>MEDICAL NUTRITION THERAPY: RD/LD ROLE IN DISEASE PREVENTION &amp; MANAGEMENT</b>  <i>We support bills that include nutrition care and lifestyle services provided by qualified health professionals to address the spectrum of chronic diseases and all forms of malnutrition.</i></p>		
HB 4015	Guillen	<p>Creates a centralized resource center within DSHS to provide information on Chronic Kidney Disease, including nutrition resources.            Status (4/21) - Heard in House Public Health Committee on 4/14, left pending</p>
SB 184	Johnson	<p>Direct DSHS to develop a report to the Legislature on regional and statewide prevalence of eating disorders, national trends and available state-funded behavioral treatment options.            Status (4/21) - SB 184 voted out of Senate Committee, first placement on Senate Calendar on 4/22; HB 551 heard in committee 4/21</p>
HB 551	S. Thompson	
SB 827	Kolkhorst	<p>Requires health benefit plans to cap an enrollee's out-of-pocket costs for prescription insulin at \$50 per month.            Status (4/21) - passed full Senate; heard by House committee on 4/20</p>



### FOOD ACCESS AND SECURITY

*We support bills that streamline and simplify supplemental nutrition assistance program certification & recertification, to increase food/nutrition access and security through the lifecycle.*

SB 224	Perry	Streamline and simplify the SNAP eligibility certification and recertification process for Texans 60 and older. Status (4/21) - SB 224 passed full Senate; HB 701 voted out of committee on 4/20
HB 701	Walle	

### PANDEMIC RESPONSE

*We support bills that protect health care providers and professionals in public health settings who perform their duties in times of disasters and public emergencies*

SB 6	Hancock	Provide broad, retroactive civil liability protection to health care providers who have performed their duties safely and in good faith during the pandemic. Status (4/21) - SB 6 passed full Senate & referred to House Committee; HB 3659 has been heard in committee.
HB 3659	Leach	
SB 437	Blanco	Requires the state to establish and maintain a 90-day reserve supply of PPE, and requires HHSC to develop rules for procurement, storage and distribution. Status (4/21) - Recommended for Senate Local/Uncontested Calendar

### FOOD SAFETY

*We support bills that improve access to and utilization of safe food, as well as awareness of food allergens and foodborne pathogens.*

HB 464	Cortez	Requires food service establishments to post educational information about food allergens, with an emphasis on building employee awareness. Status (4/21) - Reported out of House Committee; in Calendars Committee
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### Legislative Visit Tips:

1. Introduce yourself as a Licensed Dietitian (or student)
  - o Give them time to introduce themselves
2. Explain what part of their district you're from (make small talk)
3. Talk about what you do day-to-day as dietitian
  - o Ask if they know any RDs
4. "The Pitch" – what piece(s) of legislation are you here to discuss or what you want them to know/do
5. Tie in a personal story (patient, family member, etc)
  - o Use stories, analogies and visuals to simplify the complexity of health information
  - o *Stories stick like glue while the facts fade*
  - o *They have many meetings, so try to be memorable*
6. Leave behind: business card and handouts

### If they ask for more information or specific follow-up:

=> Contact any of the TX Academy Public Policy Reps:

[Public\\_Policy@eatrighttexas.org](mailto:Public_Policy@eatrighttexas.org)

[State\\_Policy@eatrighttexas.org](mailto:State_Policy@eatrighttexas.org)

[Consumer\\_Protection@eatrighttexas.org](mailto:Consumer_Protection@eatrighttexas.org)