

# From Policy to Practice: Avenues for Making Change

2021 MAND Advocacy Day  
Maryland Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics  
February 24, 2021  
Noon-1 p.m. Eastern Time

# Objectives

- Understand the relationship between policy, advocacy and advancement of the nutrition and dietetics profession
- Identify current Academy federal and state-level policy initiatives
- Learn how you can engage in grassroots advocacy efforts

# Speaker

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## **Nate Stritzinger, MPH, RDN**

Manager, Grassroots and State Advocacy  
Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

▶ *I have no conflicts of interest to disclose* ◀



# Polling Question!


Go to [www.menti.com](http://www.menti.com) and use  
the code 47 07 49 4



As a nutrition and dietetics professional, which issue is most important to you?

1. Payment and coverage of nutrition services
2. Telehealth
3. Licensure
4. Order-writing privileges
5. Food access and food security
6. Obesity care
7. Health equity
8. Something else? Type it in.

**Every job in nutrition and dietetics is  
impacted by public policy.**



# Federal Policy Update

# Preparing for the 117th Congress

- Reintroduction of the MNT Act
- Appropriations funding

# The MNT Act



# Quick History Lesson: MNT Under Medicare Part B



1997

Congress instructs HHS  
and IOM to study MNT  
under Medicare

# Quick History Lesson: MNT Under Medicaid Part B

IOM recommends MNT; Congress  
authorized MNT under Medicare for  
diabetes and renal disease

1997

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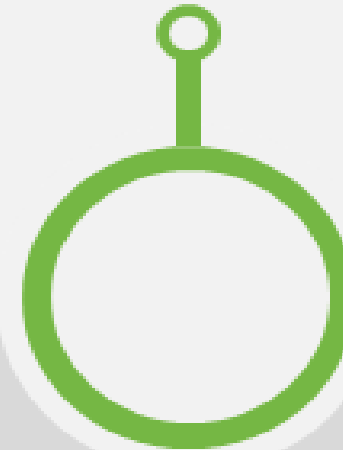
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2002

MNT Medicare benefit  
takes effect



# Quick History Lesson: MNT Under Medicaid Part B

IOM recommends MNT; Congress  
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MNT added to list of Medicare  
telehealth services

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# Quick History Lesson: MNT Under Medicaid Part B

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2011

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and IOM to study MNT  
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MNT Medicare benefit  
takes effect

MNT no longer requires  
copay as preventive service

## Fast-Forward to 2021...

- Physician referral required for MNT services
- Time and scheduling challenges
- Additional disease states not yet added under Medicare
- High rates of chronic disease endure

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# The MNT Act

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- Introduced in 2020
- To be reintroduced in the 117<sup>th</sup> Congress



# New Diagnoses Covered

- Prediabetes
- Obesity
- Hypertension
- Dyslipidemia
- Malnutrition
- Eating Disorders
- Cancer
- HIV/AIDS
- Celiac Disease
- Any other condition leading to unintentional weight loss



# Other Provisions

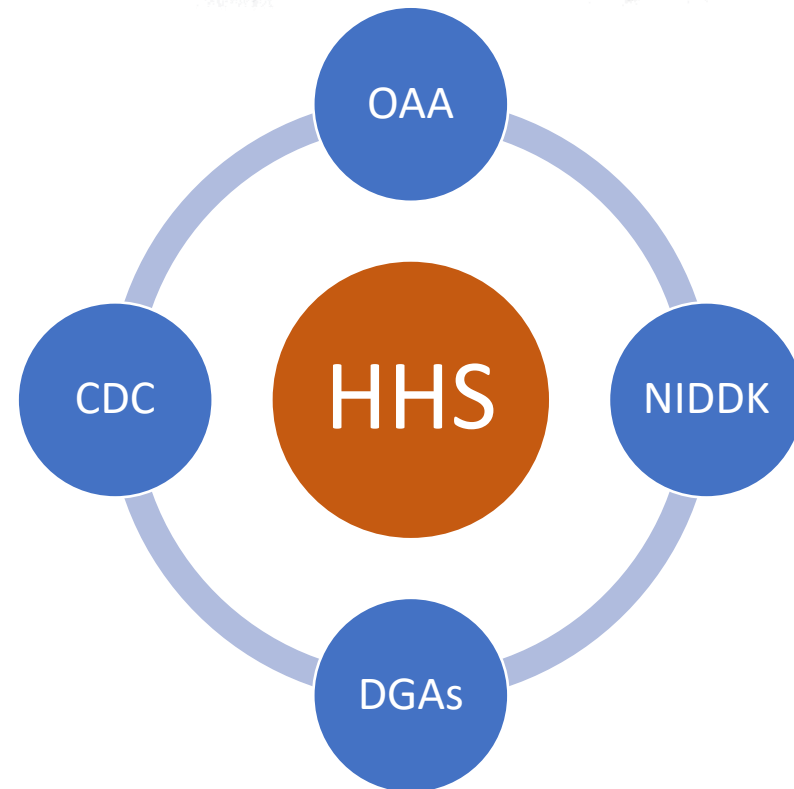
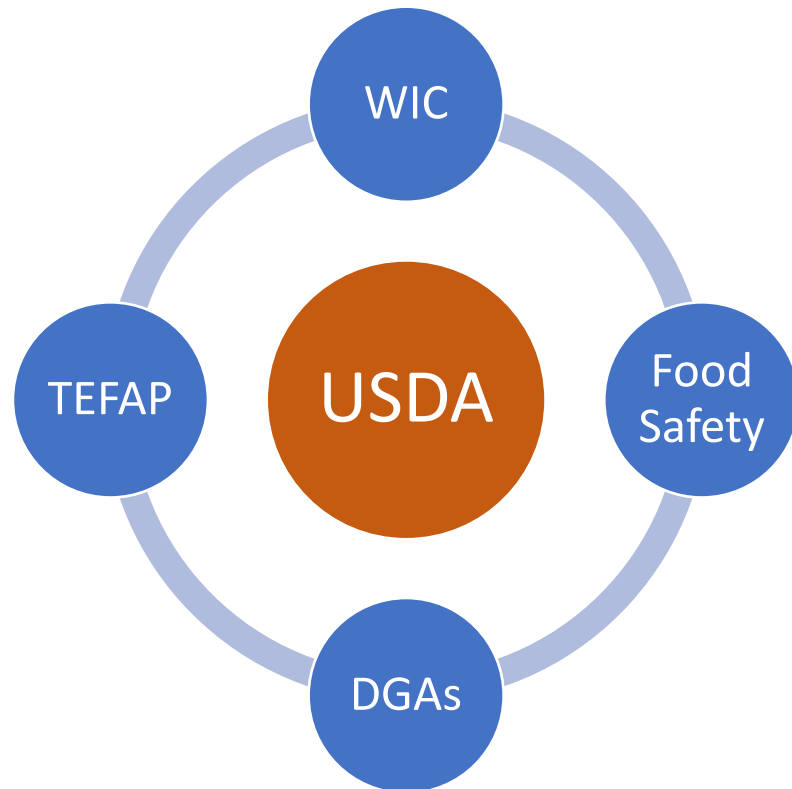
- Allows for further expansion of MNT Medicare benefit
  - Authority given to the Secretary of Health
    - U.S. Preventative Services Task Force
    - Established protocols or clinical guidelines
- Broadens referring providers



# Impact Beyond Medicare

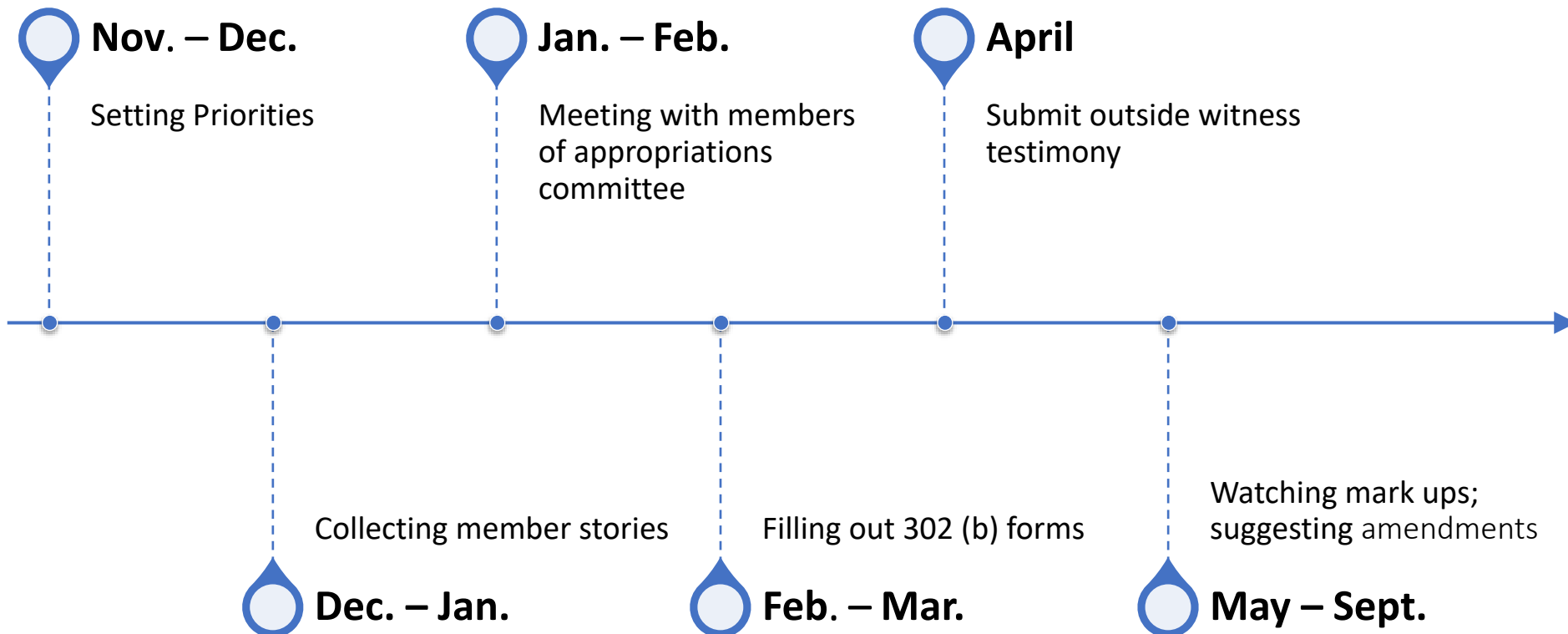
# Appropriations Advocacy

# Funding for Programs, Services and Research





# Appropriations Advocacy Timeline

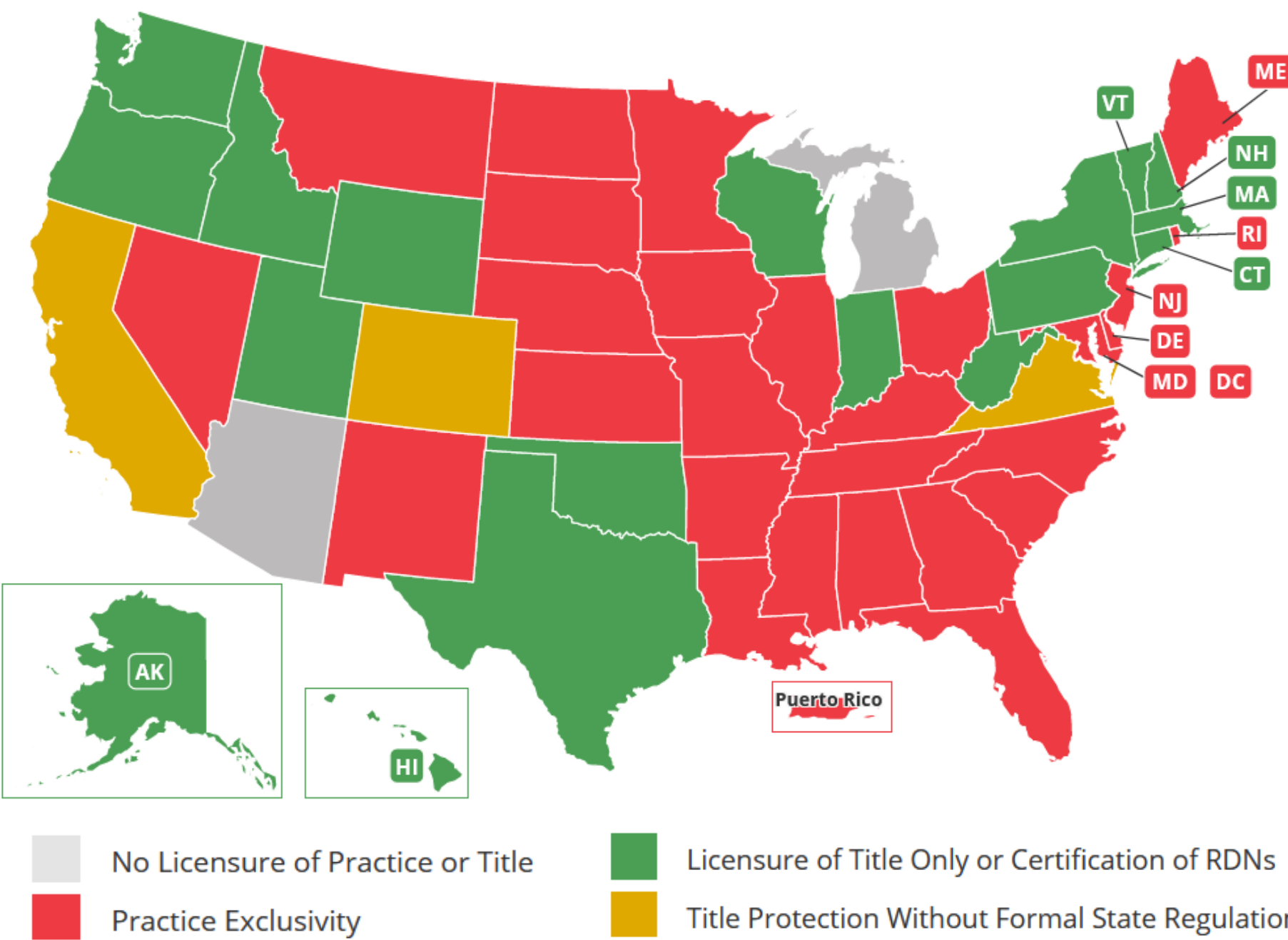




# State Policy: Licensure

# State Licensure

- Licensure of Practice vs. Title Protection
- Definition of scope of practice
- Consumer protection is #1 reason!

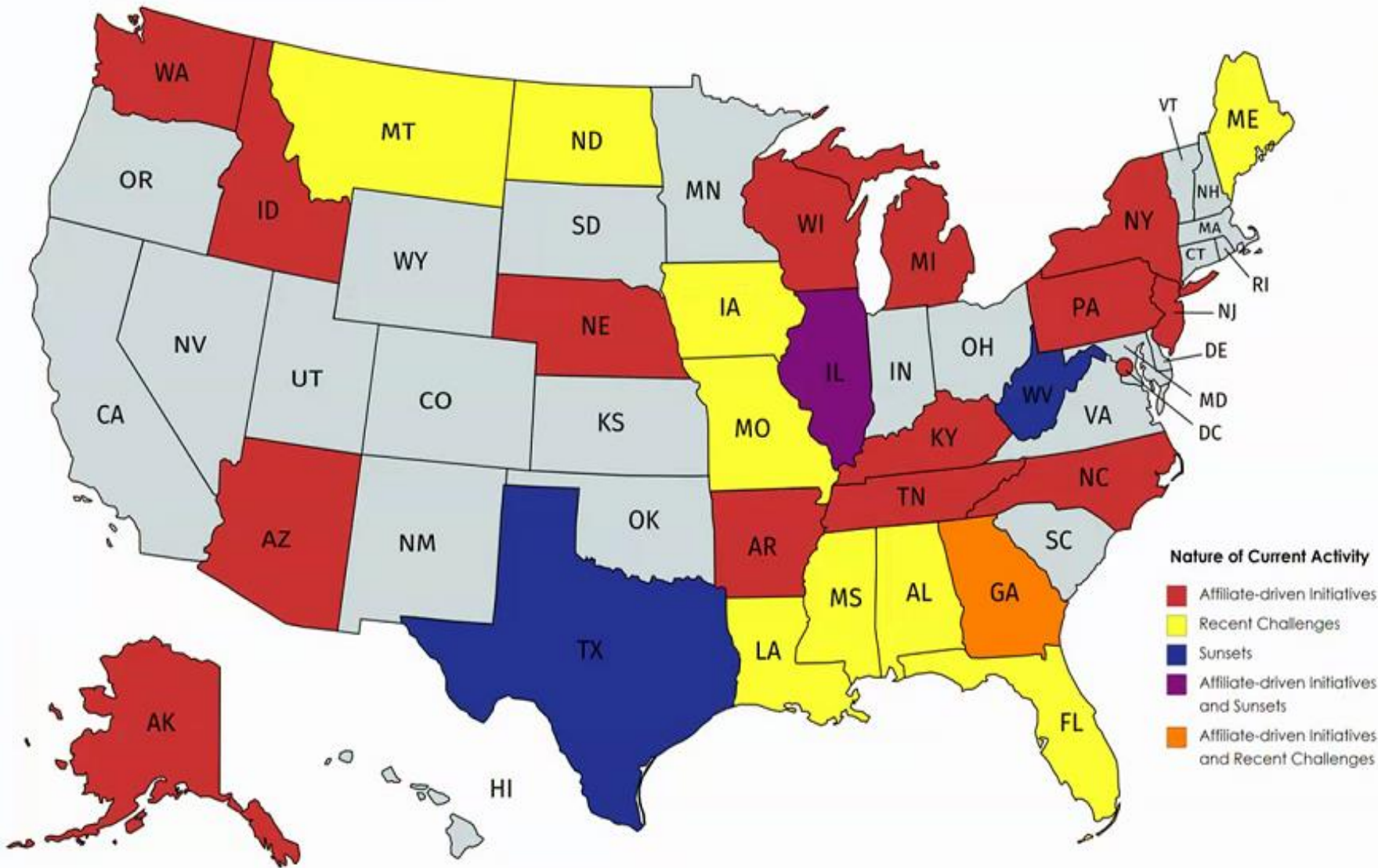




# National Licensure Strategy

- Developed in response to licensure landscape
- A partnership between the Academy and our affiliates!
- Solve tomorrow's problems today
  - Scope of practice
  - Telehealth
  - Reciprocity

# Overview of Challenges, State Initiatives



## 1. Affiliate-driven initiatives

- Therapeutic diet ordering
- Close loopholes; fix processes
- Stronger consumer protections

## 2. Recent challenge to dietetics licensure law (in courts and capitols)

## 3. Sunset (law or regs)



# Advocacy: Avenues for Making Change



**WHAT IF I TOLD YOU**

**YOUR VOICE ACTUALLY MAKES A DIFFERENCE?**

# Make Your Voice Heard



**Take Action Alerts**



**Share your story**



**Fill out the Member  
Policy Interest Survey**

Take Action  
Today

<https://eatrightpro.org/action-center>



# Get Involved



**Learn the policy  
issues**



**Know your elected  
officials**



**Meet with your  
elected officials**

# Connect with Your Legislators

- Schedule a meeting request
- Prepare for the meeting
  - Do your homework
  - Talking points
  - Leave-behind





# How to Talk to Your Legislators

- It's just a conversation
- Introduce yourself, highlight your constituency
- Keep it concise, easy to understand
- Facts and stories
- Clearly state your 'ask'



# Continue the Conversation

- Follow up
- Build on your relationships
- Practice makes perfect!





## Virtual Advocacy: Do's and Don'ts

### Do

- Be flexible
- Keep meetings short
- Be candid and direct
- Prioritize relationship building

### Don't

- Rely on email exclusively
- Use video for every meeting
- Have too many people at each meeting
- Focus only on business

# Recap

- Every job in nutrition and dietetics is impacted by food and nutrition policy
- The MNT Act expands coverage and payment opportunities for RDNs
- Federal appropriations = funding for crucial programs, services and research
- Licensure impacts legal scope of practice and helps us protect the public
- Your voice makes a difference - get out there and advocate!

# Questions?

**Nate Stritzinger, MPH, RDN**

Manager, Grassroots and State Advocacy

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

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