



April 30, 2018

The Honorable Julie Emerson
Louisiana House Representative
900 North Third Street
Baton Rouge, LA 70804

Dear Representative Emerson:

On behalf of the nation's 6,199 certified Clinical Nurse LeadersSM (CNL[®]), the Commission on Nurse Certification (CNC), the autonomous certifying arm of the American Association of Colleges of Nursing (AACN), would like to express our concern with *The Occupational Licensing Review Act - Louisiana House Bill 748*. We urge you to slow the process for approval to allow more time to carefully consider this legislation. It is important to understand the genesis and intent of the proposal. Additional time is also needed to explore the ramifications of the legislation for the public, professionals, and employers. Public hearings to discuss this legislation before passage would be useful.

CNC recognizes individuals who have demonstrated professional standards and knowledge through CNL certification. The CNL certification program is accredited by the National Commission for Certifying Agencies (NCCA), the accrediting arm of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence (ICE).

Like many other non-governmental credentialing agencies, CNC advocates for certification in order to validate an individual's professional competency and qualifications for practice based on well-defined industry standards. This assures hiring managers, communities of interest, and the public that certified individuals have met professional standards in their field.

In today's ever changing "complex" healthcare environment, the justification for national certification of the workforce is inevitable. Our master's prepared certified CNLs practice across the continuum of care within any healthcare setting and bring current best practice to the units. Furthermore, a CNL brings a higher knowledgeable nursing workforce through "national" certification resulting in more standardization of the CNL skill set, improved morale and proven higher quality outcomes for staff and patients alike.

CNLs oversee care coordination, provide direct patient care in complex situations, put evidence-based practice into action, ensure patients benefit from the latest innovations in care delivery, evaluate patient outcomes and have the decision-making authority to change care plans when necessary. By earning the CNL certification, our professional nurses are leaders and active members of the interdisciplinary health care team.

As a member of the Institute for Credentialing Excellence, CNC fully supports the recommendation by the American Society of Association Executives (ASAE) to "remove House Bill 748's prohibition on holders of voluntary certifications using the term 'certified' as a title."

Certified nurses in Louisiana value certification and see it as a means to prove to employers that they are competent in their skills, advocates for life-long professional development, and dedicated to improving the quality of healthcare in your state. Moving this bill forward would be damaging to so many certified professionals in Louisiana and will in turn diminish the value of the certification they worked so hard to achieve and diminish the quality of healthcare.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide our comments regarding this bill and how it will impact so many professional certification programs and certificants in Louisiana. Please let us know how CNC can contribute to this important discussion by contacting Shantal Hall, CNC Director, at 202-370-3608 or shall@aacnnursing.org.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tammy Lee".

Tammy Lee, MSN, RN, CNL
CNC Board of Commissioners, Chair