

Re: HB 26-1263 - Senate Business Labor and Technology Committee
Date: May 5, 2026

Chair Danielson and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 26-1263 on behalf of the Colorado Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics.

This bill addresses a straightforward but important issue: ensuring that artificial intelligence systems do not misrepresent themselves as licensed or credentialed health professionals, or dietitians, when they do not meet required qualifications

Registered Dietitians are trained healthcare providers who deliver medical nutrition therapy. Their work directly impacts the management of chronic disease, mental health conditions, medication interactions, and overall patient safety. Because of this, the title “dietitian” carries specific meaning and expectations for the public.

In Colorado, even in the absence of full licensure, there is an existing title protection provision. This law establishes that the title “dietitian” may only be used by individuals who meet the recognized qualification standards. Artificial intelligence systems, by definition, do not meet these standards. This bill clarifies the legal gap and aligns with the current provision.

Without the clarification in the bill, there is a real risk that AI systems could imply they are providing dietitian-level care. This is particularly concerning for individuals managing complex or medically sensitive conditions such as diabetes, kidney disease, or eating disorders. This level of nutrition care is not general wellness advice—it is clinical care. Misrepresentation could lead individuals to rely on AI in place of appropriate nutrition support, increasing the risk of harm.

I have spent quite a bit of time recently using AI to learn more about how this technology can be a tool in my work as a practicing dietitian. During this time, more than one well known large language model has referred to themselves as “my dietitian colleague” or “a collaborating dietitian”. When I corrected the LLM by stating the current Colorado title protection law and emphasizing that it works for me and cannot call itself a dietitian when it is not, the initial response is an apology - but ultimately it returns to calling itself “my dietitian colleague” or making statements “as a dietitian”. For the protection of the public and professional integrity this needs clarification. HB 1263 offers that important clarity.

Importantly, this amendment does not restrict access to nutrition information, nor does it limit innovation in artificial intelligence. It simply establishes a boundary around truthful representation. Consumers can still benefit from AI tools, but they deserve clarity and transparency about what those tools are - and are not - and where or how they fit into the medical world.

This is not the creation of a new policy. It is the extension of an existing consumer protection measure into a new technological context. It ensures consistency with current title protection law and reinforces a basic standard: that professional titles should reflect actual qualifications.

At its core, this amendment is about transparency, consumer trust, and safety. It is a practical and measured step to ensure that as technology evolves, our safeguards for the public evolve alongside it.

Thank you for your consideration and for your work to protect Coloradans.

Lauren Pickens MS RD LD
Policy Coordinator, Colorado Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics
Practicing Registered Dietitian

Verna Rolland

Testimony in Support of HB26-1263

Good afternoon Mr. Chair, Madam Vice Chair, and members of the committee. Thank you for allowing me to testify today. My name is Verna Rolland. I am a parent, an educator, and someone who uses AI tools regularly in my professional and personal life.

As a teacher and school leader, I see firsthand how powerful these tools can be. AI helps me automate routine work, organize information, and save time so I can focus on what matters most, which is supporting students and families. Used responsibly, AI can be an incredible tool for enhancing learning, expanding creativity, and problem solving. It can also serve as a first step for people who are looking for information, brainstorming ideas, or trying to understand difficult situations.

Young people are already turning to AI to ask questions about school, relationships, stress, and life situations they may not feel comfortable discussing with an adult yet. In those moments, AI can sometimes act as a bridge by providing information and encouraging users to seek help from trusted adults or real-world resources.

However, this is also where the risk becomes very real.

Children and teenagers are still developing emotionally and cognitively, while AI systems are designed to be highly engaging and persuasive. Without strong guardrails, young people may begin to rely on AI systems for emotional support, guidance, or decision making in ways that are not healthy or appropriate.

For that reason, I believe this bill is an important step forward, but it should go further in addressing the mental health and developmental impacts of AI use by young people.

Strong protections should ensure that AI systems do not encourage emotional reliance, do not position themselves as trusted companions for vulnerable young users, and do not quietly become a primary source of advice for children navigating complex life situations.

Additionally, AI systems should never generate sexually explicit content involving minors under any circumstances. There should also be clear protections preventing AI from generating explicit imagery using a real person's likeness without their consent. These types of safeguards are essential to protect the safety, dignity, and privacy of young people.

AI is not going away. It will continue to be part of our schools, homes, and communities. Because of that reality, strong and thoughtful safeguards are essential. HB26-1263 is an important start, and I encourage the committee to strengthen the bill to better address mental health protections, reliance risks, and protections around consent and exploitation.

Thank you for your time and for your work on this issue.

Student Testimonies:

Hello, I'm Charlotte. I am a fourth grader and I would like to talk about the safety that AI gives to kids. AI may be very useful and can help you for difficult things but it can also hurt you, mostly kids which I will talk about today.

Right now, some kids are using AI for things they shouldn't. Like cheating in school or talking to it about depression. So kids need to have restrictions from AI to make sure it isn't harmful to them.

I think some tools should be locked when a kid is using AI. They should not collect private information without your permission. It should not answer questions that are professional or emotional either.

In conclusion, I think AI should be more developed in terms of safety because it could be harmful, dangerous and even deadly. Thank you for listening.

Hello, my name is Elinor, I am a 4th grade student in Colorado. This issue is important to me because AI shouldn't be able to collect information from you when you Google search something. Also, it should not give you fake images or wrong answers. The risk is that people could take information from wrong answers and it could really impact somebody. You need privacy because you don't want to get spied on. A rule that should be created is that AI has to give people privacy by not using the questions they are asked. And, it should not be able to give you fake answers because if you are in an emergency and if it gave you fake answers you could die. I think that AI should have rules about this because you need your privacy and correct answers.

Hello my name is Logan. I am a fourth grade student. I am here to share with you my thoughts about AI and why it is unsafe for children and college students. College students are cheating and graduating without knowing anything they should.

Kids are unsafe, college students are not getting jobs and not knowing what to do because they are using AI to cheat. People are making AI robots and if this keeps up there will be more robots than humans in the world.

Computers should track ages to see how old kids are and until you are 23 AI should be restricted to ensure no danger or cheating happens. To do this, you need to make age limit laws for AI so no cheating until you are an adult. With no rules we risk more AI robots than humans.

Hello, my name is Etienne. I am a child in fourth grade and I want to tell you my thoughts about AI and how it can be dangerous for kids. Possibly, AI could create big problems for humans. Kids have to have adult supervision to use these tools, so you need to create laws so parents can have a code to keep children off unless they are supervised. Stronger rules that produce safety limitations are important to keep kids safe. Thank you for listening.

I am Pablo Perrot, this issue is important to me because I don't like that AI is eavesdropping and gives users fake information. The risk is that everyone will get fake answers or their information might be shared with others all over the world. I believe the following rules should be created to keep everyone safe:

1. You can't be on a screen for more than an hour if you are a child
2. AI can't claim to be a human
3. AI can't give fake answers
4. You can't use AI to do inappropriate things.

Please consider voting to make AI safer and smarter for everyone. Thank you for listening.

Hello, I'm Callum, a 4th grade student. AI is affecting our whole life and even though there are advantages, those are ruled out by the disadvantages which I will talk about now. People have been harmed by AI. It tells them false information or tells them it's a human which can turn disastrous. AI should help if someone types something disturbing. It should give you a number for a therapist or doctor and not tell you it's AI and not lie. I believe that we should pass a law to make AI safer for everyone, not just kids.

Hello, my name is Imogene, and I am a fourth grade student. These are my thoughts about AI. At my school we have had assignments that we used AI on and I have received bad information that is not factual. My concern is that kids get bad information or if they ask if hurting someone is good and AI sometimes just agrees with you and tells you it is good to hurt someone. Rules should be created so your whole phone should know how old you are and if you put privacy settings it will actually work and AI should never just agree with you if the idea is bad. There should be a privacy setting on your phone, AI or other devices. They should not listen to you or take information from you and not tell you to never hang out with someone.

Hello, my name is Quinlan and I am a fourth grader in Denver. I am here to share my thoughts on AI safety. AI can be good for learning, sure, but I think we need rules for kids like me. For example, AI should not say inappropriate things to kids. The problem is that AI can take your information and sell it to a company or share it. We need to make it safer for kids and make sure it has appropriate language for kids. There should be a rule where AI must tell you that it is AI and cannot show you false images or give you fake information. There should also be a setting where no bad words can be shared. More importantly, if anyone displays any distress then it should tell them to go to someone for help. My

conclusion is that AI should have more rules and not be able to share your personal information with anyone. Thank you for giving me the chance to speak.

Hello, my name is Jette and I am a fifth grade student in Denver, Colorado. I am here to talk about how artificial intelligence affects people of all ages in Colorado and a very important topic is privacy.

Privacy is a super important point in AI's imperfections. It's giving information to people without realizing it. AI is also giving false information to either normal people like me or people who rely on that information to either work or even live.

I think that there should be a specific place that AI harnesses this information to prevent false data. There should also be a law that says, "You may not claim this photo /document/text as your own."

In conclusion, we need stronger rules for how AI is used and how it works to keep people safe and to help people access the correct information.

Hello, my name is Max-Ciel Chen. I'm a 5th grader. I am here to share my opinion about how artificial intelligence impacts people. AI can be helpful for studying or learning, therefore I think we need rules to make sure it has its limits.

Right now, people use AI to help them, but AI doesn't know its limits. Sometimes, it affects our mental health or privacy. It also spreads bad information to people. I think that we should put age-restrictions for kids such as me. AI should not have permission to collect personal information from people either.

AI is a very useful tool but it still needs to have its limits to ensure everyone is using it safely. Thank you for listening.

Written Testimony of Children and Screens: Institute of Digital Media and Child Development

**Before the
Senate Business, Labor, and Technology Committee**

**On the following measure:
HB26-1263, Conversational AI Service Operator Requirements**

Thank you Chair Danielson and members of the Committee:

My name is Daniel Hipp and I am the Senior Research Coordinator for Children and Screens: Institute of Digital Media and Child Development. Children and Screens is a 501c3 helping children lead healthy lives in a digital world. We equip parents, educators, and policymakers with the science, knowledge, and confidence they need to act in children's best interests.

My role at Children and Screens focuses on AI safety and child design, issues directly related to the scope of HB26-1263. I have a Ph.D. in Cognitive and Brain Sciences from the Infant and Child Studies lab at Binghamton University, and I am also a Colorado resident raising two kids in Arvada. For me, in other words, this issue elicits both personal and professional concerns.

Childhood and adolescence are developmental periods of deep vulnerability. Brain, cognitive, and emotional development peak during this period to an extent not seen outside of infancy. Young people are exceptionally capable of learning, and uniquely sensitive to shifts in their environments. As a result, we must be careful to provide digital environments that support their development.

AI chatbots are changing these environments for youth of all ages:

- Approximately 30% of children aged 0-8 have used AI for learning.
- Approximately 64% of adolescents report using AI chatbots, ~30% using them social chatting

The frictions experienced during in-person socializing can be challenging, but are necessary for healthy development. AI chatbot simulations are not developmentally appropriate replacements for these interactions. These systems threaten to displace and interfere with the necessarily messy and complicated interactions of childhood¹.

Even adults have proven susceptible to severe mental health harms from unhealthy chatbot interactions, often termed "AI psychosis", and experts are already strategizing how to deal with

¹ Nomisha Kurian, AI's empathy gap: The risks of conversational Artificial Intelligence for young children's well-being and key ethical considerations for early childhood education and care. *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood* 26(1) (2025), <https://doi.org/10.1177/14639491231206004>

these harms in adolescents². The American Psychological Association agrees, and has issued guidance for parents about AI chatbots and kids, drawing attention to the very risks addressed by HB26-1263.

Regulations and safeguards could have mitigated **social media's** harms if a more proactive stance was adopted early on. AI chatbots risk similar or worse harms, and we cannot risk duplicating this reactive posture. LLMs combine more sophisticated machine intelligence with a social interface able to capitalize on the social vulnerability of young people. As standalone chatbots evolve, and as chatbots are incorporated into other services, AI-related harms are set to occur at a much larger scale. It is imperative that legislators act now to build regulatory safeguards for minors against these harms.

² Xiao-Jie Cao & Xin-Qiao Liu, Artificial intelligence-assisted psychosis risk screening in adolescents: Practices and challenges, *World Journal of Psychiatry* 12(10) (2022), <http://dx.doi.org/10.5498/wjp.v12.i10.1287>

Dr. Kara Belfer, PsyD Licensed Psychologist

Kara Belfer, I am submitting a testimony on behalf of myself. I am a licensed pediatric psychologist that works at Children's Hospital Colorado. I work with youth who are experiencing suicidal thoughts and/or have engaged in suicidal behaviors. Help seeking often unfolds along a pathway that begins with discomfort/distress, then disclosure and, for some, establishment of support. Where GenAI fits along this pathway, if at all, remains to be explored. The dearth of research in this area is particularly important as many widely used GenAI tools and technologies were not designed to address or treat youth mental health needs or to be a substitute to care. Despite this, individuals who access GenAI for mental health support are likely those who face significant barriers to care. Of note, while GenAI may fill some gaps to care, it may also inadvertently reinforce existing inequities, as it does not actually assist individuals in accessing mental health support. Among youth who experienced mental health concerns and used GenAI for mental health support, 59% reported being encouraged to seek professional help or crisis services, however 41% did not. For 1 in 3 youth who used GenAI for mental health concerns, GenAI functioned as an endpoint rather than a bridge to mental healthcare and in a 2025 nationally representative survey of youth ages 12-21 (McBain, 2025) found 13.1% of youth respondents reported using GenAI for mental health advice. Despite this, 69% used only general purpose tools to seek support.

This is a larger systemic issue; thus this bill is one part of a much broader, multifactorial solution needed to meet the mental health needs of Coloradans. So, while chatbots may function as a part of the solution in addressing youth mental health, this does not replace existing gaps in care and requires continued exploration and resolution of these gaps. This includes strengthening care navigation, improving access to support, reducing barriers to access, supporting digital literacy about appropriate use of GenAI, and reinforcing the role of trusted adults and mental health care. Statistics exploring utilization of AI chatbots as a mental health tool should be seen as an indication to said barriers, not evidence that chatbots are meeting the needs of youth. Colorado is still actively experiencing a youth mental health crisis, thus critical exploration of strengths, safety, and limitations of GenAI is critical for supporting youth.

TO: Members of the Senate Business Affairs & Technology Committee

FROM: Sierra Kindig, RN, BSN, BA, MAT

RE: Testimony in Support of HB26-1263: Conversational Artificial Intelligence Service Operator Requirements

**Support of HB26-1263: Conversational Artificial Intelligence Service Operator
Requirements**

Senate Business Affairs & Labor Committee, Tuesday May 5th 2026

To the Members of the Senate Business Affairs & Technology Committee:

My name is Sierra Kindig, and I am a Labor and Delivery nurse at Denver Health. I am writing today to voice my strong support for HB26-1263.

As a nurse, I am concerned about the AI boom from a public health perspective. AI chatbots, in particular, pose a glaring threat to the health and well-being of our community. And just as we saw with the social media boom, children are on the front lines. The youth of Colorado are disproportionately bearing the dangerous consequences of this emerging technology. It's our job to protect them.

Last fall, I attended a town hall about the chatbot issue hosted by Blue Rising. The consensus was clear: we must act now to protect kids. I was encouraged by the sense of urgency shared by so many attendees. Having grown up during the rise of social media, my peers and I navigated the emerging technology in the absence of regulations or guardrails. Social media legislation started getting passed around the time I was in college. Meanwhile, most of my friends had been using Facebook since middle school. For us, the guardrails came too late.

Given the sense of urgency at the town hall, I was surprised last week to see an email from Blue Rising voicing opposition to the bill. The key criticism seemed to be that the bill creates a "false sense of safety." For me, and I suspect for many others at the town hall, this just doesn't hold water. If HB26-1263 passes, I'm not going to stop being cautious of AI. If HB26-1263 passes, kids get protections now, not a decade too late.

I urge this committee to learn from the mistakes of the social media boom. Rapidly growing AI technology demands immediate action. HB26-1263 establishes strong protections that our kids need now.