



**CENTRE FOR FOOD SAFETY AND AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH
(CEFSAR)**

**PRESS RELEASE | Issued in the public interest and for national
sovereignty.**

NIGERIA'S FOOD IS NOT FOR SALE; OUR NUTRITIONAL SOVEREIGNTY IS NOT FOR SURRENDER

CEFSAR Demands Outright Withdrawal of HB.2659, Warns Against Regulatory Monopoly and Erosion of Nigerians' Food Rights

ABUJA, NIGERIA | 22 OCTOBER 2026

The Centre for Food Safety and Agricultural Research (CEFSAR) has unequivocally rejected the proposed Nutritionists Registration Council of Nigeria Bill, 2025 (HB.2659), describing its sweeping regulatory provisions as an unacceptable threat to the constitutional provisions in protection of fundamental human rights, institutional autonomy, indigenous nutritional knowledge, scientific independence and Nigeria's food and nutritional sovereignty.

Following its formal submission to the House of Representatives Committee on Nutrition and Food Security at the public hearing of 20 October 2026, CEFSAR calls for the **IMMEDIATE AND OUTRIGHT WITHDRAWAL OF HB.2659**.

Nigeria's nutrition is not the intellectual property of any professional association. Its food heritage is not a commercial franchise. Its people must never require permission from a privileged professional establishment to preserve, investigate or communicate their indigenous food knowledge.

CEFSAR recognises the importance of qualified nutrition professionals, ethical practice and public-health safeguards. However, the proposed legislation goes considerably beyond ordinary professional registration. Sections 3 and 17 - 23 confer extensive powers concerning professional standards, educational programmes, institutional approvals, curricula and examinations, while sections 27 - 30 introduce criminal sanctions that raise serious questions about fundamental human rights, proportionality and regulatory overreach.

Nigeria already has established statutory institutions responsible for academic accreditation, food safety, product standards and public health. Creating overlapping authority without clearly defined boundaries risks administrative duplication, unnecessary costs and interference with scientific and educational independence.

More fundamentally, Nigeria faces a genuine food and nutrition emergency, because of many wide and varied factors, primary among which are economic deprivation and lack of access to real, wholesome nutritious food.

The urgent national priority is to put wholesome, safe and affordable food on Nigerian tables; not to create another expansive licensing bureaucracy.

CEFSAR further warns that concentrated regulatory powers without strong safeguards against conflicts of interest could expose national nutrition governance to undue commercial influence and foreign donors, and thereby surrendering Nigeria's food and nutrition sovereignty to undue influence and capture. The organisation demands full transparency concerning relevant financial

relationships and express protection for independent scientific scrutiny, including research and public debate about genetically modified foods - which appear to be lurking in the shadows behind the hurried push for the accelerated passage of this bill HB.2659.

The House of Representatives must remember that public trust is inseparable from legislative accountability. Nigerians are entitled to scrutinize how their elected representatives protect food security, public health, scientific freedom and national sovereignty. These are matters of enduring public confidence and legitimate democratic assessment.

CEFSAR therefore demands the withdrawal of HB.2659 and advocates a genuinely inclusive national approach that strengthens existing institutions, protects indigenous food systems, promotes scientific research and safeguards consumers without granting any professional association disproportionate control over Nigeria's nutritional future.

A profession may regulate its members. It must not be empowered to monopolize a nation's nutrition.

WITHDRAW HB.2659. PROTECT NIGERIA'S FOOD AND NUTRITION SOVEREIGNTY.

Signed:

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