

February 27, 2024

The Honorable Richard Durbin  
United States Senate  
711 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington DC, 20510

The Honorable Kevin Cramer  
United States Senate  
313 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington DC, 20510

Dear Senators Durbin and Cramer:

On behalf of the 52 undersigned organizations, we are writing to strongly support S. 3211, the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act.

The United States is facing an urgent health care workforce shortage that is only expected to get worse over the next decade. Shortages of physicians and nurses contribute to increased wait times and reduced overall access to health services, which ultimately leads to worsening health conditions and outcomes.

The United States is expected to face a shortage of up to 124,000 physicians over the next decade, with a shortfall of up to 48,000 primary care physicians, and between 21,000 and 77,100 non-primary care physicians, including up to 30,200 surgical specialists. Federal data on the nursing workforce suggest the US could need over 190,000 registered nurses each year over the next decade, complicated by high levels of turnover and declines among nursing support staff. The negative impact of this impending shortage will be particularly acute on underserved communities, as well as rural areas. Congress, therefore, must consider short- and long-term solutions to confront this crisis and improve access to care for patients no matter where they reside.

In response to these dire statistics, we strongly support the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act. This legislation would initiate a one-time recapture of up to 40,000 unused employment-based visas – 25,000 for foreign-born nurses and 15,000 for foreign-born physicians – so they can strengthen and provide stability to the U.S. health care system. This temporary recapture period concludes three years after the date of enactment.

Under this legislation, the number of highly trained nurses in the U.S. health care system could increase by expediting the visa authorization process for qualified international nurses, who are urgently needed but stuck overseas due to backlogs and other bureaucratic delays despite many being approved to come to the United States as lawful permanent residents.

The legislation would also allow for thousands of international physicians who are currently working in this country on temporary visas with approved immigrant petitions to adjust their status. Foreign-trained physicians are more likely than U.S.-trained physicians to practice in lower income and disadvantaged communities, despite the well-documented and burdensome

delays this legislation seeks to address. This crucial policy change will enable these physicians to continue serving patients ensuring every American can access needed care.

Foreign-born physicians are an invaluable component of the U.S. health care system, comprising nearly 1 in 5 of active U.S. physicians and caring for some of the most vulnerable patient populations. In fact, in the past 20 years, more than 20,000 J-1 IMGs have gone on to serve in underserved areas. H-1B physicians practicing vital specialties like geriatric medicine and nephrology also make up approximately 50 percent of active physicians. These realities necessitate that Congress continue to advance policies that help foreign-born physicians treat American patients.

Thank you for continuing to elevate the integral role immigrant health care workers play in the U.S. health care system. We look forward to working with you to advance this legislation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Eli Greenspan, Policy Advisor with Physicians for American Healthcare Access, at [egreenspan@foleyhoag.com](mailto:egreenspan@foleyhoag.com).

Sincerely,

Alliance for Headache Disorders Advocacy  
The ALS Association  
Ambulatory Surgery Center Association  
American Academy of Family Physicians  
American Academy of Home Care Medicine  
American Academy of Neurology  
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation  
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry  
American Association of International Healthcare Recruitment  
American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine  
The American Brain Coalition  
American College of Physicians  
American College of Rheumatology  
American Epilepsy Society  
American Gastroenterological Association  
American Geriatrics Society  
American Health Care Association  
American Hospital Association  
American Medical Association  
American Organization for Nursing Leadership  
American Psychiatric Association  
American Society of Anesthesiologists  
American Society of Neuroradiology  
Anxiety & Depression Association of America  
Association for Advancing Physician and Provider Recruitment

Association of American Medical Colleges (AAMC)  
Association of University Professors of Neurology  
Cohen Veterans Bioscience  
College of American Pathologists  
Federation of American Hospitals (FAH)  
Hydrocephalus Association  
Infectious Diseases Society of America  
Intealth  
International Bipolar Foundation  
Jewish Federations of North America  
Miles for Migraine  
MLD Foundation  
National Center for Assisted Living  
National Fabry Disease Foundation  
National Kidney Foundation  
National Multiple Sclerosis Society  
National Rural Health Association  
The Network of Jewish Human Service Agencies  
The Niskanen Center  
North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society (NANOS)  
Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Foundation  
Physicians for American Healthcare Access  
Premier Inc.  
Society of Critical Care Medicine  
Society of Hospital Medicine  
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons  
SynGAP Research Fund