

August 1, 2023

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
425 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Klobuchar and Collins:

The 48 undersigned organizations commend you for introducing the *Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act (S.665)*.

Regardless of geographic location, all patients deserve access to quality healthcare. Yet, the stark reality is that our country is facing a severe shortage of physicians in an expansive number of specialties. This lack of physicians is especially acute in rural and underserved communities. Thankfully, for nearly three decades the Conrad 30 waiver program has helped Americans in rural and underserved areas receive medical care from more than 15,000 high-quality international medical graduate (IMG) physicians in their local communities. A key part of the success of the current program is its flexible design that allows each state to customize the 30-waiver allocation to address its unique needs.

Continuation of this program is especially critical for specialties that train a high number of IMGs who come to the United States on J-1 visas to complete their residency. Without a Conrad 30 waiver, these visas require this category of IMGs to return to their country of origin for at least two years before applying for another visa or green card. The unfortunate byproduct of this restriction is an immediate prohibition on domestically trained IMGs practicing in our country that, in turn, jeopardizes their ability to ever practice in the United States in doubt. IMGs, however, play a vital role in providing greater access to health care for millions of patients, particularly in historically underserved communities who have also been hit hard by the recent global health care crisis.

Consequently, we strongly support that the Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act would reauthorize this crucial program for three years, make several targeted policy improvements, and permit the gradual expansion of the number of waivers granted to each state. While this program was expanded from 20 to 30 slots once before, the number of waivers allocated to each state remained stagnant for the last two decades, despite our health care workforce shortage becoming more severe.

Reauthorizing and strengthening this program is one of many policy solutions to curtail the ongoing medical provider workforce challenges across the country and we look forward to working with you to see this important legislation enacted. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Kelly McCone, Senior Congressional Affairs Manager at the American Academy of Neurology at kmccone@aan.com.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Headache Disorders Advocacy
ALS Association
Ambulatory Surgery Center Association
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Home Care Medicine
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Pediatrics
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine
American Brain Coalition
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Physicians
American College of Rheumatology
American College of Surgeons
American Gastroenterological Association
American Geriatrics Society
American Hospital Association
American Medical Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Society of Anesthesiologists
American Society of Neuroradiology
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of University Professors of Neurology
Child Neurology Society
Cohen Veterans Bioscience
College of American Pathologists
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation
Epilepsy Association
Federation of American Hospitals
HD Reach
Hydrocephalus Association
M-CM Network
Miles for Migraine
National Ataxia Foundation
National Immigration Forum
National Organization for Tardive Dyskinesia
Niskanen Center
North American Neuro-Ophthalmology Society (NANOS)
Parkinson's Foundation
Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Foundation
Physicians for American Healthcare Access
Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans (PAAIA)
Society of Hospital Medicine

The American Society for Radiation Oncology (ASTRO)
The Headache and Migraine Policy Forum
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons