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NEWS

May 08, 2020

ASA Endorses Legislation to Preserve U.S. Workforce of International Physicians

The American Society of Anesthesiologists (ASA) applauds U.S. Senators Dick Durbin (D-IL), Todd Young (R-IN), Christopher Coons (D-DE), John Cornyn (R-TX), and Patrick Leahy (D-VT) for introducing S. 3599, the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act. This bipartisan legislation would recapture 15,000 unused immigrant visas for physicians to strengthen the healthcare workforce and ensure patient access to care during the COVID-19 pandemic. ASA is pleased the bill aligns with recommendations made to the Administration earlier this year on addressing the national emergency.

ASA believes the strength of the physician workforce is vital to the overall healthcare infrastructure of our nation and urges Congress to advance this bill.

In March, ASA sent a communication to the White House formalizing key ASA recommendations to address top health concerns during the COVID-19 pandemic. In the formal letter, ASA urged the Administration to expedite immigration processes to preserve the U.S. workforce of international physicians. The expiration of visas and loss of employment authorizations due to factors outside of the control of these physicians could result in the loss of valuable members of the U.S. health care workforce at this time of critical need. Many of these international physicians work in medically underserved areas and their potential loss would disproportionately affect care in areas with scarce physician resources.

ASA thanks the Senators for introducing the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act. ASA will continue to advocate for legislation that addresses the physician workforce and work with Congress and the Administration to ensure patients have access to the care they need.