



May 13, 2020

The Honorable Rand Paul, M.D.  
United States Senate  
167 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell  
Speaker Majority Leader  
United States House of Representatives United States Senate  
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support for the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act

Dear Senator Paul and Majority Leader McConnell:

My name is Dr. Vishwanath Sagi and I am the President of the Commonwealth neurological Society [CNS], the state neurology society for Kentucky. The current Commonwealth neurological Society membership exceeds 340 individuals and includes neurologists as well as affiliated professionals [registered nurses, nurse practitioners, residents in neurology and medical students interested in pursuing a career in neurology]. The Commonwealth neurological Society is best positioned to advocate for the needs of patients and providers in the commonwealth of Kentucky. The Commonwealth neurological Society founded in 2007 is a vital and growing network of neurologists and affiliated professionals that will benefit our patients.

On behalf of our physician and resident members, the Commonwealth neurological Society [CNS] is writing to voice our strong support for the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act and to urge the Senate to quickly pass the legislation (S.3599). The Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act is bipartisan legislation from Senators David Perdue (R-GA), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Todd Young (R-IN), Christopher A. Coons (D-DE), John Cornyn (R-TX) and Patrick J Leahy (R-VT) designed to address the shortage of physicians and nurses and augment the nation's health care workforce. Specifically, the bill allows the recapture of 15,000 unused immigrant visas for physicians as well as 25,000 visas for nurses.

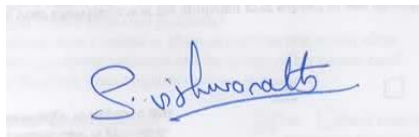
Like other states, Kentucky's health care system depends heavily on International Medical Graduates (IMGs) to help fill a critical workforce need, especially in rural and other underserved

---

areas. However, their value has never been more evident than during the COVID-19 pandemic. IMGs are serving on the state's medical front lines and providing access to high-quality, life-saving care. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the U.S. was already facing a serious shortage of physicians largely due to the growth and aging of the population and the impending retirements of many physicians. This shortage was dramatically highlighted by the lack of physicians in certain key areas during the COVID-19 pandemic which forced states to recall retired physicians, expand physicians' practice areas, and amend out of state licensing laws. This heightened demand for physicians will only continue to grow, and soon will outpace supply, leading to a projected shortfall of nearly 122,000 physicians by 2032. Furthermore, over the past 10 years, more than 10,000 J-1 IMGs have worked in underserved communities. Thus, increasing the number of visas that are available to IMGs is critical to addressing this mounting shortage. The ability to recapture 15,000 unused employment-based physician immigrant visas from prior fiscal years would help enable our U.S. physicians to have the support they need and our U.S. patients to have the care they deserve.

Thank you in advance for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "S. Vishwanath". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a horizontal line.

Vishwanath Sagi MD, MPH  
President  
Commonwealth Neurological Society