



May 6, 2020

The Honorable Martha Roby
504 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congresswoman Roby:

I am writing this letter of support for S.948, Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act and S.3599, Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act. This legislation is vitally important for improving access to healthcare in medically underserved areas, which includes much of the State of Alabama. Our health system has relied upon the Conrad State 30 J-1 Visa waiver program in the recruitment of many of our wonderful physicians into critical specialties – primary care, pulmonary medicine, endocrinology, neurology, infectious disease as well as others.

Currently, physician residents from other countries training/working in the US on J-1 visas are required to return to their home country for two years, after their residency training, before they can apply for another visa or green card. The Conrad 30 program allows these physicians to remain in our country after residency training without having to return to their home country if they agree to practice in an underserved area for three years. The proposed reauthorization bill would not only retain the positive impact of Conrad 30 but would also extend the required period for practicing in an underserved area from three to five years, thereby ensuring physician coverage in underserved areas for a guaranteed longer period of time. In return, the participating physicians would be eligible to receive priority access with the green card system, thereby improving the likelihood of those physicians remaining in the underserved areas to practice.

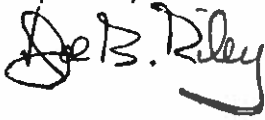
Conrad 30 and Physician Reauthorization Act are absolutely necessary if our nation, especially Alabama, is to improve upon the current issue of a vast undersupply of practicing physicians. The rural nature of our state and our health system's market make the challenge that much greater. Please support this critical legislation.

In addition, as the COVID-19 global pandemic continues to devastate our nation, it is important to ensure that the healthcare needs of millions are adequately met. During this time, it is crucial that the United States do all it can to quickly address the shortage of doctors and nurses in our country, while also providing support to those temporary healthcare workers already on the front lines of this crisis.

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Therefore, I urge you to sign on to co-sponsor and support the passage of the bipartisan Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act (S.3599), introduced on May 5, 2020 by Senators Perdue (R-GA), Young (R-IN), Cornyn (R-TX), Durbin (D-IL), Coons (D-DE), and Leahy (D-VT). This bipartisan legislation is an important first step in addressing the critical shortage of medical professionals in our nation. Its passage and the work of those who are able to benefit from it, will save countless lives in our state and across the country, especially throughout the COVID-19 global pandemic.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joe B. Riley". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "J" and "R".

Joe B. Riley
President and CEO

JBR/srb