



# MISSISSIPPI STATE MEDICAL ASSOCIATION

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The Honorable Trent Kelly  
United States House of Representatives  
1005 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Congressman Kelly:

On behalf of the 4,800 physician and medical student members of the Mississippi State Medical Association, I want to express our support for H.R. 2895, the "Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act," and ask for your consideration to co-sponsor this critically important legislation to improve access to care in medically underserved communities.

Currently, both the House (H.R. 2895) and Senate (S.948) are considering the Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Act which would, among other notable provisions, reauthorize the Conrad 30 J-1 visa waiver program. Currently, resident physicians from other countries working in the U.S. on J-1 visas are required to return to their home country after their residency has ended for two years before they can apply for another visa or green card. The Conrad 30 program allows these physicians to remain in the U.S. without having to return home if they agree to practice in an underserved area for three years.

Rural and low income-urban areas have challenges meeting their patient care needs and depend often-times on physicians in this program to provide health care services. With a growing physician shortage across the country, this legislation would ensure that physicians who are educated and trained in Mississippi and across our nation can continue to provide care for patients.

If enacted, this legislation would reauthorize the J-1 visa waiver program for an additional three years and protect patient access to care in areas that are medically underserved. Additionally, the legislation would establish a streamlined pathway to a green card for participating physicians. Physicians who practice in underserved areas for five years would be eligible to receive priority access within in the green card system.

We believe that the Conrad State 30 and Physician Reauthorization Act will improve continued access to care in medically underserved communities in Mississippi and across the U.S. Thank you again for your support of the profession of medicine and protecting the physician's ability to provide safe and dependable patient care.

Warmest regards,

J. Clay Hays, Jr., MD  
President  
Mississippi State Medical Association