



June 4, 2020

Dear Senators Perdue, Durbin, Young, Coons, Cornyn, and Leahy:

**Mark Wilf**  
CHAIR, BOARD OF TRUSTEES

**Jodi J. Schwartz**  
VICE CHAIR, BOARD OF  
TRUSTEES

**David T. Brown**  
NATIONAL CAMPAIGN CHAIR

**Shelly Kupfer**  
CHAIR, NATIONAL WOMEN'S  
PHILANTHROPY

**Harold Gernsbacher**  
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**Julie Platt**  
SECRETARY

**David J. Butler**  
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**David Golder**  
CHAIR, DOMESTIC POLICY &  
GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS

**Rachel Hoffer**  
CO-CHAIR, NATIONAL YOUNG  
LEADERSHIP

**Adam Miller**  
CO-CHAIR, NATIONAL YOUNG  
LEADERSHIP

**Cynthia D. Shapira**  
CHAIR, UNITED ISRAEL  
APPEAL

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PRESIDENT & CEO

**Stephan O. Kline**  
ASSOCIATE VICE PRESIDENT  
FOR PUBLIC POLICY &  
INTERIM DIRECTOR OF THE  
WASHINGTON D.C. OFFICE

**Jonathan S. Westin**  
SENIOR DIRECTOR, HEALTH  
INITIATIVES

**Elizabeth A. Cullen**  
COUNSEL, HEALTH POLICY

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) strongly supports the recently introduced, bipartisan Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act (S. 3599) and urges the Senate to swiftly pass this vital legislation. This measure will facilitate critically needed access to health services by directing federal immigration authorities to recapture unused employment-based visas and allocate them for qualified immigrant doctors and nurses. By expediting the visa approval process, the Healthcare Resilience Workforce Resilience Act will make a profound difference as our nation attempts to meet pressing health needs during this public health emergency.

JFNA is the national umbrella organization for 146 federations and 300 independent communities that together support a network of health care, long-term care, and behavioral health care Jewish-affiliated nonprofit partner agencies serving most major population centers across North America. Our partner agencies include 15 leading academic medical centers/health systems, 100 Jewish nursing homes and aging communities, 125 Jewish family & children's agencies that provide home, hospice and behavioral health care, and 14 group homes, serving more than one million Jewish and non-Jewish clients, including some of the most vulnerable older adults and people with disabilities living in our communities.

The Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act would recapture previously authorized employment-based immigration visas -- 25,000 unused visas for nurses and 15,000 unused visas for doctors -- and allocate these visas to foreign-born doctors and nurses, granting them permanent residency through an expedited approval process. This bipartisan, targeted legislation will help strengthen our nation's health care workforce while improving access to health care for Americans at this critical time in our nation's fight against the COVID-19 pandemic.

Our nation is already experiencing a shortage of physicians, nurses and other health care professionals, a situation that has only been exacerbated by the pandemic.<sup>1</sup> According to the U.S. Census Bureau, the current physician and nurse workforce shortage is projected to worsen over the next 12 years driven by the nation's population growth and the aging of the baby boomers. Our non-profit network of hospitals, nursing homes, home care agencies, hospice providers, and group homes increasingly rely on immigrants to fill gaps in their workforce needs, given that immigrants account for one-sixth of the nation's overall health care and

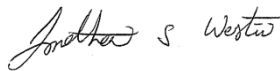
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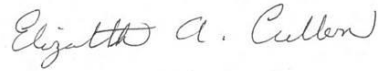
<sup>1</sup> Joyce Frieden, *COVID-19 is Making the Physician Shortage Worse, Groups Say*, MedPage Today (March 27, 2020), retrieved at <https://www.medpagetoday.com/infectiousdisease/covid19/85661>.

social service workforce. These immigrant health and direct care workers help our partner agencies sustain operations and continue caring for vulnerable clients. Thank you for your leadership in introducing this innovative legislation and please let us know how we can aid your efforts to see this measure enacted into law. If you have any questions, please contact Jonathan Westin, Senior Director for Health Initiatives at [Jonathan.Westin@jewishfederations.org](mailto:Jonathan.Westin@jewishfederations.org), or Elizabeth Cullen, Counsel for Health Policy, at [Elizabeth.Cullen@jewishfederations.org](mailto:Elizabeth.Cullen@jewishfederations.org).

Sincerely,



Jonathan S. Westin  
Senior Director, Health Initiatives



Elizabeth Cullen  
Counsel, Health Policy