



State of Louisiana
Louisiana Department of Health
Office of Public Health

June 1, 2020

The Honorable Bill Cassidy
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Neely Kennedy
520 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senators Cassidy and Kennedy:

On behalf of The Louisiana Department of Health (LDH), Office of Public Health (OPH), I am writing to share our support for the Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Authorization Act (S. 948/H.R.2895). The Office of Public Health has the responsibility to process and recommend J-1 visa waiver requests for participation in the Louisiana Conrad State 30 Program. The United States Department of State (US DOS) and the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) both recognize that letters of support provided by OPH indicate that we are acting as an Interested Government Agency (IGA) for the J-1 visa waiver request application being submitted for approval.

The Office of Public Health is committed to assuring that all Louisiana residents have access to quality affordable health care – the primary purpose of this program is to improve access to primary health care in areas where there is a shortage of physicians, and secondarily, to improve access to needed specialty care. This office recognizes that this is the goal of other similar programs nationwide and that Conrad 30 is an essential recruitment tool of physicians to rural and underserved communities.

This office currently has twenty-eight (28) individuals in the program, eight (8) applications being reviewed at the DOS, and another one (1) being reviewed internally. This office has the luxury of providing this support at no-cost to the applicant.

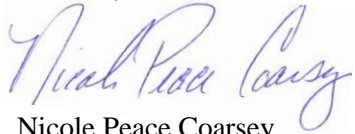
The proposed legislation identifies that physicians in the Conrad 30 program nationally have made critical contributions to our country's rural and underserved communities. In Louisiana, we can attest that this program provides rural and underserved areas the ability to fill healthcare positions that otherwise remain

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vacant. Reauthorization will not only allow states to expand beyond 30 slots which in turn will lessen the burden of the current workforce shortages but also make it permanent. Louisiana will continue to support the Conrad 30 program and know that an expansion will better serve the rural and underserved communities.

If you have any questions, please contact Nicole Coarsey at 225-342-1583 or Nicole.Coarsey@la.gov.

Sincerely,



Nicole Peace Coarsey
Louisiana State Primary Care Officer