

June 24, 2020

Dear Honorable Member of Congress,

On behalf of AJC, the global Jewish advocacy organization, I write to encourage your support for H.R.2895/S.948, the Conrad State 30 & Physician Access Reauthorization Act, which allows foreign doctors studying in the U.S. to obtain a visa to remain here after completing medical residency if they commit to practice in a medically underserved area for at least three years.

Immigrant healthcare workers are essential to our healthcare system and have been critical in the fight against COVID-19. In 2018, immigrants were 16.3 percent of the U.S. population but made up 29 percent of all U.S. physicians, 22 percent of nursing assistants, and 38 percent of home health aides. AJC advocates reform of the current immigration system that upholds the rights of immigrants, while also strengthening the security and prosperity of our country. The Conrad 30 Waiver Program has successfully brought thousands of foreign physicians, trained in the U.S., to rural, inner city, and other medically underserved communities since 1994. Upon completion of their residencies on J-1 visas, a program for nonimmigrants to pursue medical education or training in the U.S., these doctors are required to return to their home country to practice for two years. Under the Conrad 30 Waiver Program, doctors receive a waiver of the home return requirement in exchange for 3 years of service in a medically underserved area in the U.S.

The Conrad State 30 & Physician Access Reauthorization Act expands and alters the Conrad 30 Waiver Program in order to continue improving access to healthcare in rural and underserved communities. The act reauthorizes the program through the fiscal year of 2021 and expands the number of waivers distributed through the program. Currently, states are authorized to receive 30 waivers each fiscal year. The bill increases the number of waivers that each state can receive from 30 to 35 waivers. For every year that a state uses at least 90% of their waivers, they will be granted an additional 5 waivers. Upon reaching 45 waivers, this requirement increases to the usage of 95% of their waivers. Even if a state does not meet 90% usage of their waivers, they will never be granted fewer than 30 waivers per year. Reauthorizing and improving upon the Conrad State 30 Waiver Program will help advance access to healthcare for Americans living in rural and underserved communities and ensure that the best and brightest from abroad, those who have been educated here in the United States, can stay and continue to contribute to American society.

Thank you for your consideration of our views and we encourage you to cosponsor this important legislation.

Respectfully,



Julie Rayman
AJC Director of Political Outreach