



July 20, 2020

Dear Senator Peters and Stabenow,

On behalf of Central Michigan University College of Medicine, we are reaching out to seek your support of the recently introduced bipartisan bill S.3599 **"Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act" (HWRA) and the "Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act."**

The **HWRA (S.3599 & HR.6788)** was introduced in May 2020 and has seen growing bipartisan support. The HWRA would expedite processing of immigrant visas for greatly needed nurses and physicians without replacing American workers.

A long-term solution to healthcare shortages and inequity can be fulfilled by the **Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act (S.948 & HR.2895)**. The Conrad 30 program has been successfully bringing physicians to serve in rural and underserved areas throughout the country and has enjoyed bipartisan support in Congress since 1994. This reauthorization act seeks to provide several enhancements that would focus on the retention of physicians in these areas. The bipartisan nature of co-sponsorship of this legislation is recognition of the looming problem of physician shortage in our country.

As of July 20, 2020, the United States has endured almost 4 million cases of coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) and 150,000 deaths (Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health). Michigan has had over 80,000 cases and app. 5000 deaths. The pandemic continues unabated, exposing the fragility of our healthcare system.

Here in Michigan, about 27.4% of our healthcare workforce comprises of International Medical Graduates (IMGs) according to the American community Survey 2018 and CATO Institute (Cato Institute. Immigrant Health Care Workers by Occupation and State. Accessed at [www.cato.org/publications/publications/immigrant-health-care-workers-occupation-state-on-20-July-2020](http://www.cato.org/publications/publications/immigrant-health-care-workers-occupation-state-on-20-July-2020)). This translates to greater than 10,000 physicians currently working in Michigan. Many of these providers are on the frontlines of this pandemic, putting their own lives at risk for the sake of their fellow Americans.

International medical graduates consist of both U.S. citizens or legal permanent residents and attended medical school outside the United States as well as non-U.S. citizens who were born outside the United States and received their medical training (residency and fellowship) in the United States. Though IMGs constitute 24.5% of all actively practicing specialists in the United States, most of these physicians work in rural and underserved areas. Recent calculations suggest that a patient admitted to a hospital for COVID-19 has a greater than 1-in-3 chance of being treated by an IMG physician (Mathema S. Immigrant doctors can help lower physician shortages in rural America. Accessed at [www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2019/07/29/472619/immigrant-doctors-can-help-lower-physician-shortages-rural-america](http://www.americanprogress.org/issues/immigration/reports/2019/07/29/472619/immigrant-doctors-can-help-lower-physician-shortages-rural-america) on 20 June 2020).

Numerous medical organizations from across the US have voiced their support of this legislation and we ask for your full support of meeting the urgent healthcare needs of our society.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "G. Kikano" with a stylized flourish at the end.

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