



June 15, 2020

The Honorable Mike Crapo
United States Senate
239 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable James Risch
United States Senate
483 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Mike Simpson
United States House of Representatives
2084 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Russ Fulcher
United States House of Representatives
1520 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Senator Crapo, Senator Risch, Representative Simpson and Representative Fulcher:

There has never been a more urgent need for the care that foreign-born physicians and foreign-trained nurses provide than during the current COVID-19 pandemic. These professionals play a critical role in ensuring the health of our communities, and they are required to meet rigid standards of equivalent education, English fluency and state licensure, and must have clean disciplinary records.

As you may be aware, we have been facing a physician shortage in the United States for years. Foreign-trained physicians and nurses do not displace American workers; in fact, the demand for physicians and nurses continues to grow. Many foreign-trained physicians and nurses are recruited to rural and inner-city hospitals, locations that find it more difficult to recruit domestically.

Locally, in Nampa Idaho, I have several foreign-born physicians on our Medical Staff who are top-notch hospitalists and who have been living and working in our community, serving our citizens for over a decade. I have listened to their stories about fears of deportation over clerical backlogs within our immigration offices. These men and women are high earners, contribute to our economy, live in our neighborhoods and have children who have attended our schools their entire lives. Most importantly, these physicians are saving lives and we could not operate our hospital without them. These men and women are examples of what it means to come to this country and take part in the American dream but are excluded due to immigration policies. They should be allowed to enjoy the protections and security that U.S. citizenship allows, without constant fear of deportation and catastrophic losses to our healthcare system.

I write to express our strong support for several pieces of legislation that recognize the value of foreign-born physicians and nurses to our healthcare system:

- The Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act
- The Backlog Elimination, Legal Immigration, and Employment Visa Enhancement Act, S. 2091.
- Conrad 30 reauthorization HR 2895 and S 948



Saint Alphonsus

We thank you for your understanding of the critical care foreign-trained and foreign-born physicians and nurses provide to Idahoans, and how urgent the need is for additional health care providers and flexibility with work assignments at this time. We look forward to working with you to advance these pieces of legislation, and I am happy to discuss further with you if it would be helpful to understand our local perspective on this issue.

Sincerely,

Travis Leach
President, Saint Alphonsus - Nampa