



July 28, 2020

The Honorable Mark R. Warner
United States Senate
703 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Tim Kaine
United States Senate
231 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Health Care Workforce Resilience Act – S. 3599

Dear Senator Warner and Senator Kaine:

On behalf of Virginia's hospitals and health care systems, the more than 130,000 people they employ, and the many patients and communities they serve, thank you for your service and leadership during this unprecedented health care crisis. We appreciate your assistance in ensuring that Virginia's hospitals are given the resources they need to not only serve their communities but remain financially viable.

As you both are aware, our entire country, not just Virginia, is experiencing a health care workforce shortage. That is why, on behalf of VHHA's members, I am writing to request that you support the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act (the "Act"). This legislation will help hospitals, clinics and group practices overcome some of the barriers to recruiting and retaining physicians, thereby, increasing health care access in rural and underserved communities across Virginia.

This bi-partisan legislation, introduced by Sens. Perdue (R-GA), Young (R-IN), Durbin (D-IL) and Coons (D-DE), will help ensure thousands of foreign-born nurses and doctors who want to practice in the United States are given the opportunity to do so. The Act will authorize the U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to recapture up to 25,000 immigrant visas for nurses and 15,000 immigrant visas for physicians.

It is important to note that the Act would not create more visas; rather, it would simply reallocate a limited number of unused visas from prior years for doctors and nurses to use now.

The Act also puts many safeguards in place. For instance, in order for employers to hire individuals with these visas, the employer must attest that an American worker will not be displaced. The Act also ensures the eligible foreign-born medical professionals meet high standards of equivalent education, state licensure and English fluency, and they must have clean disciplinary records.

There is no doubt that foreign-born health care workers are vital to Virginia's health care system, as they are to the rest of the United States. At this time, while the fight to control the

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pandemic falls on the shoulders of our healthcare workforce, the country's hospitals would benefit greatly from the larger pool of health care workers secured by the Act.

We urge you to support the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act and help secure a strong, sustainable pipeline of talent for our hospitals. No one knows for certain what the post COVID-19 landscape will look like, but the foreign-born health care professionals secured by the Act will help our nation fight the pandemic now and help hospitals to continue to serve their communities into the future

We hope to work with you to advance this legislation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,



Julie Dime
Vice President, Government Advocacy
Virginia Hospital & Healthcare Association