



The Greater Louisville Medical Society was established in 1892 and has a rich history of improving the health and well-being of community through service. We are a strong physician organization that works diligently to bring about better health. Therefore, we fully recognize the medical need that Kentuckians have in regard to the COVID-19 Pandemic, particularly in hot spots throughout the Commonwealth.

To address Kentucky's troubling healthcare provider shortage and put the Commonwealth in a better position to respond to this unprecedented public health challenge, we write to strongly encourage Majority Leader McConnell to include the provisions of S. 3599—the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act—in the final COVID-19 relief package that Congress will be formulating in the weeks ahead. We feel confident that this legislation will vastly improve access to care and make a positive difference in the lives of many Kentuckians.

This important legislation, sponsored by Senator David Perdue with significant bipartisan support, addresses this shortage by recapturing unused visas and issuing them to up to 15,000 physicians and 25,000 nurses to provide critical reinforcements on the frontlines of our nation's pitched struggle against the COVID-19 pandemic. Further, it allows physicians with approved petitions to adjust their status, giving them the certainty necessary to relocate to areas most in need—our rural communities.

As you are certainly aware, for many years, rural healthcare providers across Kentucky have struggled to attract and retain physicians and skilled nurses—exacerbating preexisting health disparities between rural Kentuckians and many of their more urban peers. Kentucky has one of the worst physician-patient ratios in the nation with just 229 active physicians and 77 active primary care physicians per 100,000 as of 2016, according to the Association of American Medical Colleges report.

As a longtime champion of solutions for rural healthcare access and the only Congressional Leader not from New York or California, I hope the Leader will use the opportunity presented by the final COVID package to advance policies that can help Kentucky in its fight against COVID-19's immediate threat and set the stage for a brighter, healthier future—including S.3599, the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act.

I hope you will share this message with the Majority Leader as he returns to Washington and begins negotiations on the final COVID relief package—S.3599 represents an opportunity to significantly reinforce Kentucky's existing healthcare infrastructure and set us on a path for better health outcomes in the future.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

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