



“Access to Quality Health Care for All of South Carolina”

August 14, 2020

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Leader, US Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Nancy Pelosi
Speaker, US House
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Chuck Schumer
Democratic Leader, US Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy
Republican Leader, US House
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Leadership,

I would like to thank you for your leadership and support of our country's health care system during the ongoing COVID-19 public health emergency. We are incredibly appreciative of Congress's efforts to bring much needed assistance to our communities. The South Carolina Primary Health Care Association is the unifying organization for South Carolina's 24 Federally Qualified Health Centers (FQHCs). As such, we are committed to strengthening the health center workforce so that they can continue to provide and expand comprehensive health care services to over 429,000 patients and others living in medically underserved communities. I am writing you today to ask that you support the bipartisan Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act which will help strengthen our nation's health care workforce.

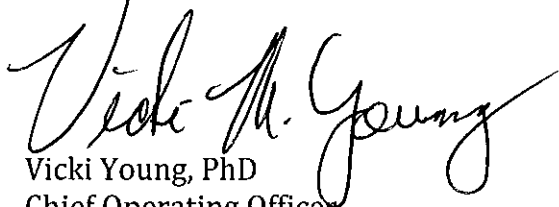
The Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act would authorize the U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services to recapture up to 25,000 immigrant visas for nurses and 15,000 immigrant visas for physicians. This legislation would draw from unused visas previously authorized by Congress and allocate them to eligible foreign-born medical providers wanting to practice in the United States. This will expand access to health care and the capacity to respond to COVID-19 by increasing the number of physicians and nurses available to provide health care services to our communities.

Federal government data projects that by the year 2025, there will be a national shortfall of up to 160,000 physicians and one million nurses. Our country is facing a workforce shortage that is being exacerbated by the testing and treatment needs of

COVID-19. Foreign-born doctors and nurses are crucial members of the United States health care workforce. South Carolina FQHCs operate in medically underserved communities, where they are often the only medical provider accessible in their community. By supporting legislation that expands the ability to recruit and retain physicians and nurses, you will increase access to health care for our country's medically underserved.

Thank you for your time and attention. I humbly ask that you support this legislation, and others that will help our country address the health care workforce shortage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Vicki M. Young". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, prominent "V" at the beginning.

Vicki Young, PhD

Chief Operating Officer

South Carolina Primary Health Care Association