



Florida Rural Health Association  
*One Voice for Florida. Louder.*

09/11/2020

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
284 Russell Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Rick Scott  
716 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, DC 20510

*Re: S.3599 Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act*

Dear Senators Rubio and Scott:

On behalf of the Florida Rural Health Association (FRHA), I would like to urge you to support S.3599 Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act (the "Act"). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, our country was already facing a growing shortage of Physicians. [A June 2020 Association of American Medical Colleges \(AAMC\) study projects a shortfall of up to 139,000 Physicians by 2033.](#)

The Act would allow United States Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) to "recapture" up to 40,000 immigrant visas [previously authorized by Congress that have not currently been used](#). The bill would respond to severe Physician & Nursing shortages by reserving [15,000 visas for foreign-born Physicians and 25,000 visas for foreign-born Nurses](#).

The Act would not impact the employment or wages of current American healthcare workers. It requires their employers to provide a letter attesting that the hiring of a foreign national has not and will not displace a U.S. worker. To qualify, an I-140 immigrant petition must be filed within 90 days of the end of the national emergency declaration for COVID-19, which went into effect on March 1, 2020, and is still in effect for an indeterminate time into the future.

International Medical Graduates (IMGs) are a valuable resource, both nationally and in Florida. Many IMGs are foreign nationals practicing in the U.S. on non-immigrant work visas. They are more likely to practice in rural and underserved areas, providing needed care to communities that lack it, thanks in large part to policies like Conrad 30 Waiver Program.

[The Act](#) ensures foreign-born Physicians and Nurses have protections and flexibility to respond to COVID-19, Opioid epidemic, and other healthcare issues. It strengthens the workforce and ensures access to quality healthcare.

One-sixth of our nation's health care work force is foreign-born. FRHA strongly supports the Act. It has bipartisan support in both chambers of Congress. We hope to work with you to advance this legislation. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sarah Catalanotto, MPH, CTTS  
Co-Manager  
The Florida Rural Health Association