



Ohio Rural  
Health  
Association

[www.ohioruralhealth.org](http://www.ohioruralhealth.org)

May 4, 2021

**RE: Support of S.1024 - A bill to enhance our Nation's nurse and physician workforce during the COVID-19 crisis by recapturing unused immigrant visas.**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/senate-bill/1024/cosponsors?r=2&s=3&searchResultViewType=expanded>

**The House companion bill is H.R.2255 - To enhance our Nation's nurse and physician workforce during the COVID-19 crisis by recapturing unused immigrant visas.**

<https://www.congress.gov/bill/117th-congress/house-bill/2255/cosponsors?searchResultViewType=expanded>

Dear Senators Durbin, Cornyn, Leahy, Young, Coons, and Collins:

Health care workforce shortages that have plagued rural communities for decades have become exacerbated by the COVID-19 virus pandemic. Prior to the pandemic, 77% of rural counties were designated Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs), and while approximately 20% of the nation's population live in rural areas, only 9% of US physicians practice in rural America.

This important bipartisan legislation would allow tens of thousands of nurses and physicians to join the fight against COVID-19 and address the significant health care workforce shortages in rural American by recapturing unused immigrant visas that Congress has previously authorized and allocated to international doctors and nurses who have trained in the United States. This could improve access to high quality health care services in rural communities and allow them to combat the COVID-19 pandemic and ultimately save lives.

ORHA supports the reintroduction of the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act and commends your efforts to protect rural health by working to bring thousands of qualified physicians and nurses to join the United States healthcare service delivery.

For further information, please contact Beth Kluding, [bkluding@hvch.org](mailto:bkluding@hvch.org), or Ken Martin, [martin.1540@osu.edu](mailto:martin.1540@osu.edu) ORHA Legislative Committee Co-chairs.

Thank you,

Beth Kluding

*Legislative Committee Co-Chair*

Ken Martin

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