

June 22, 2021

The Honorable Dick Durbin
United States Senate
711 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable John Cornyn
United States Senate
517 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Patrick Leahy
United States Senate
437 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Todd Young
United States Senate
185 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Christopher Coons
United States Senate
218 Russell Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

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

The American College of Rheumatology (ACR), representing over 9,500 rheumatologists and rheumatology interprofessional team members writes to support in support of S. 1024, *The Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act* which would reallocate visas previously authorized by Congress that have not currently been used to support the American medical workforce. ACR is pleased to support this legislation and applauds you for your work on this issue.

As a specialty that suffers from a severe workforce shortage that often means long wait times for patients to get appointments and to receive care, the ACR has long supported increased funding for residency slots, student loan repayment benefits, other programs to grow the medical workforce and the number of rheumatologists available to serve our patient population, which is estimated to be as high as 91 million Americans by some studies. To this end, the ACR also welcomes foreign medical professionals who wish to serve this patient population.

The bipartisan *Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act* (S. 1024/H.R. 2255) creates an important opportunity for 15,000 visas to be reallocated for International Medical Graduates (IMGs) and 25,000 visas for foreign-born nurses to ensure durable immigration status for our vital workforce, which our country is relying on now more than ever. ACR applauds the efficiency of utilizing previously approved but unused visas in prioritizing the needs of the American patient population.

The ACR looks forward to working with you to reduce the impact of the medical workforce shortage on patients and to ensure that all patients living with rheumatic disease have access to high-quality care. If you have any additional questions, please contact Lennie Shewmaker McDaniel, JD, Director of Congressional Affairs, at LMcDaniel@rheumatology.org.

Sincerely,



Elizabeth Blair Solow, MD, MSCS
Chair, Government Affairs Committee
American College of Rheumatology

June 22, 2021

The Honorable Bradley Schneider
U.S. House of Representatives
300 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Thomas Cole
U.S. House of Representatives
2207 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Tom O'Halleran
U.S. House of Representatives
318 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Donald Bacon
1024 Longworth House Office Building
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Representatives Schneider, Cole, O'Halleran, and Bacon:

The American College of Rheumatology (ACR), representing over 9,500 rheumatologists and rheumatology interprofessional team members writes to support in support of H.R. 2255, *The Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act* which would reallocate visas previously authorized by Congress that have not currently been used to support the American medical workforce. ACR is pleased to support this legislation and applauds you for your work on this issue.

As a specialty that suffers from a severe workforce shortage that often means long wait times for patients to get appointments and to receive care, the ACR has long supported increased funding for residency slots, student loan repayment benefits, other programs to grow the medical workforce and the number of rheumatologists available to serve our patient population, which is estimated to be as high as 91 million Americans by some studies. To this end, the ACR also welcomes foreign medical professionals who wish to serve this patient population.

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