

March 26, 2025

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
425 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington D.C., 20510

The Honorable Susan Collins
United States Senate
413 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington D.C., 20510

The Honorable Jacky Rosen
United States Senate
713 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington D.C., 20510

The Honorable Thom Tillis
United States Senate
113 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington D.C., 20510

Dear Senators Klobuchar, Collins, Rosen, and Tillis:

On behalf of the 45 undersigned organizations, we are writing to strongly support the introduction of the Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act (S. 709).

The healthcare workforce is under increasing strain. The aging U.S. population is increasing demand for healthcare services while also contributing to physician attrition. At the same time, reimbursement challenges in Medicare, along with insufficient investment in graduate medical education, have made the practice of medicine more difficult and constrained the pipeline of new doctors. These challenges are particularly acute in rural and underserved communities, where workforce shortages have led to severe access issues. Today, more than 80 million Americans lack adequate access to primary care, exacerbating health disparities across the country.

Confronting this challenge will require a comprehensive approach from Congress. A key part of the solution is leveraging international medical graduates (IMGs). One in five physicians in the U.S. is foreign-born, and these doctors play an essential role in filling workforce shortages in areas and specialties that struggle to recruit and retain physicians. These include geriatric medicine, interventional cardiology, nephrology, neurology, and critical care medicine, where IMGs are disproportionately represented. The Conrad 30 program is an effective tool for incentivizing U.S.-trained international physicians to work in these high-need areas.

Over the last 30 years, the program has facilitated placement of approximately 20,000 physicians in communities that otherwise might not have had access to health care. The program has also demonstrated success at retaining physicians beyond the three-year commitment. However, misaligned incentives and outdated policies are jeopardizing the future success of the program.

The Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act would make necessary updates to strengthen the program. In addition to gradually increasing the number of available waivers per state if certain thresholds are met, it also clarifies and improves the waiver process for both physicians and employers by making clear the transition period between receiving a waiver and beginning work. These commonsense changes will improve program efficiency and help ensure that more IMGs can pursue opportunities in underserved areas.

One of the strengths of the Conrad 30 program is its flexible design, which allows each state to tailor the program to meet its specific healthcare needs. This reauthorization will reinforce that flexibility while providing needed clarity and incentives to attract and retain more highly qualified physicians. As workforce shortages worsen, Congress must act with urgency to advance this legislation and strengthen one of the most successful programs for addressing healthcare workforce shortages.

Thank you again for your leadership on this important issue. We look forward to working with you to advance this bill and ensure that the Conrad 30 program continues to serve as a healthcare and economic lifeline for communities in need.

Sincerely,

Alliance for Headache Disorders Advocacy
Ambulatory Surgery Center Association
American Academy of Family Physicians
American Academy of Neurology
American Academy of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation
American Association of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry
American Association of Neuromuscular & Electrodiagnostic Medicine
American Brain Coalition
American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists
American College of Physicians
American College of Radiology
American College of Rheumatology
American College of Surgeons
American Gastroenterological Association
American Geriatrics Society
American Hospital Association
American Medical Association
American Psychiatric Association
American Society of Anesthesiologists
American Society of Neuroradiology
Anxiety and Depression Association of America
Association for Advancing Physician and Provider Recruitment (AAPPR)
Association of Clinicians for the Underserved (ACU)
Association of American Medical Colleges
Association of University Professors of Neurology
College of American Pathologists
Bobby Jones Chiari & Syringomyelia Foundation
Dystonia Medical Research Foundation
Federation of American Hospitals (FAH)
Hope for HIE

Hydrocephalus Association
Infectious Diseases Society of America
International Bipolar Foundation
M-CM Network
Miles for Migraine
MLD Foundation
NANOS (North American Neuro- ophthalmology Society)
National Ataxia Foundation
The Niskanen Center
Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Foundation
Physicians for American Healthcare Access (PAHA)
Premier Inc.
Society of Hospital Medicine
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons
SynGAP Research Fund dba CURE SYNGAP1