

July 29, 2022

The Honorable Richard Durbin
Chair
152 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles Grassley
Ranking Member
224 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Chair Durbin and Ranking Member Grassley,

The 63 undersigned organizations respectfully urge you to consider and pass S.1810/ H.R. 3541, the Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act before the end of the 117th Congress.

Regardless of geographic location, all patients deserve access to quality healthcare. Across practices and specialties, our country is facing a severe shortage of physicians, especially in rural areas. For nearly three decades the Conrad 30 waiver program has helped Americans in rural and underserved areas receive medical care from more than 15,000 high-quality physicians in their local communities. This program is especially critical for specialties that train a high number of international medical graduates (IMGs) who rely on J-1 visas. Without a Conrad 30 waiver, these visas would require United States-trained physicians to return to their country of origin for at least two years, thus prohibiting them from practicing domestically upon completion of their residency and placing their ability to ever practice in the United States in doubt. These IMGs play a vital role in providing greater access to health care for millions of patients, particularly in historically underserved communities who have also been hit hard by the current global health care crisis.

The Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act would reauthorize this crucial program for three years, make several targeted improvements to the program, and permit the gradual expansion of the number of waivers granted to each state. This program was previously expanded once before, but the number of waivers has remained stagnant for the last two decades, despite our health care workforce shortage becoming more severe. As the significant impacts of “Long COVID”, i.e., post-acute sequelae of SARS-CoV-2 infection (PASC), are emerging for millions of Americans, having a sufficient workforce to address the additional demand for care is critical. The Conrad 30 program provides an opportunity for IMG physicians who complete their residency in the United States to immediately provide necessary care in underserved locations. The bipartisan reforms included in this legislation are essential to helping combat the healthcare workforce shortage especially as we are entering a period with a rapidly increasing demand for physicians.

Additionally, the current program is designed in a flexible way that allows each state to customize their 30-waiver allocation under the program to address their unique needs. We support the reauthorization and strengthening of this program as one of many policy solutions to curtail the ongoing medical provider workforce challenges across the country.

The Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Reauthorization Act has tremendous support in Congress with the Senate and House bills garnering 26 and 110 bipartisan cosponsors respectively. In addition, the legislation has earned the support of a broad range of constituencies, including patients, physicians, hospitals, and immigration organizations. **The undersigned organizations urge you to act expeditiously and pass S. 1810/H.R. 3541 before the conclusion of the 117th Congress in order to immediately**

improve the physician workforce shortage and enhance patients' access to quality care across the country. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Hallie Koch (hkoch@aan.com), Government Relations Program Manager, or Derek Brandt (dbrandt@aan.com), Director of Congressional Affairs at the American Academy of Neurology.

Sincerely,

AHS

Alliance for Headache Disorders Advocacy

Alliance for Patient Access

ALS Association

American Academy of Family Physicians

American Academy of Home Care Medicine

American Academy of Neurology

American Academy of Otolaryngology-Head and Neck Surgery

American Academy of Pediatrics

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 Rheumatology

American College of Surgeons

American Epilepsy Society

American Gastroenterological Association

American Geriatrics Society

American Hospital Association

American Medical Association

American Psychiatric Association

American Society for Radiation Oncology

American Society of Anesthesiologists

Anxiety and Depression Association of America

Association of American Medical Colleges

Association of University Professors of Neurology

Child Neurology Society

Cohen Veterans Bioscience

College of American Pathologists

Dystonia Medical Research Foundation

Epilepsy Association of Central Florida, Inc.

Federation of American Hospitals

HD Reach

Hope for HIE

Huntington's Disease Society of America

Hydrocephalus Association

Infectious Diseases Society of America
International Bipolar Foundation
M-CM Network
Miles for Migraine
MLD Foundation
Movement Disorders Policy Coalition
National Association of State Head Injury Administrators
National Ataxia Foundation
National Immigration Forum
National Organization for Tardive Dyskinesia
National Rural Health Association
National Spine Health Foundation
Niskanen Center
North American Neuro Ophthalmology Society
Parkinson's Foundation
Phelan-McDermid Syndrome Foundation
Physicians for American Healthcare Access
Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans
Renal Physicians Association
Society of Hospital Medicine
STXBP1 Foundation
SynGAP Research Fund, Inc.
The Headache and Migraine Policy Forum
The Michael J. Fox Foundation for Parkinson's Research
The Society of Thoracic Surgeons