

November 7, 2023

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

The Honorable Kevin Cramer
United States Senate
330 Hart Senate Office Building
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senators Durbin and Cramer:

On behalf of our nearly 5,000 member hospitals, health systems and other health care organizations, our clinician partners — including more than 270,000 affiliated physicians, 2 million nurses and other caregivers — and the 43,000 health care leaders who belong to our professional membership groups, the American Hospital Association (AHA) writes in support of the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act (S. 3211).

The U.S. health care system is facing unprecedented worker shortages, with the Bureau of Labor Statics estimating there will be 193,100 openings for nurses in each of the next ten years.¹ For physicians, there could be a shortage of between 37,800 and 124,000 physicians by 2034 for both primary and specialty care.² One of the immediate strategies used to ease shortages in the health care work force is the use of immigrant workers. Foreign-trained nurses and doctors do not displace American employees. Instead, they play critical roles in providing support for our hospitals and the communities they serve. They are highly qualified professionals who must meet our nation's standards for education, English fluency, and state licensure.

The Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act would recapture up to 40,000 unused employment visas – 25,000 for nurses and 15,000 for physicians. It would also require expedited processing for those qualified to secure these types of visas without the assessment of additional processing fees. Qualified international nurses and physicians are essential providers of patient care, and this legislation recognizes their critical role and contributions to the health of our nation.

¹ <https://www.bls.gov/ooh/healthcare/registered-nurses.htm#tab-6>

² <https://www.aamc.org/news/press-releases/aamc-report-reinforces-mounting-physician-shortage>



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We look forward to working with you on the passage of the Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act.

Sincerely,

/s/

Stacey Hughes
Executive Vice President