

April X, 2026

The Honorable Mike Lawler
324 Cannon House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Sanford D. Bishop, Jr.
2407 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Maria Elvira Salazar
2162 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

The Honorable Yvette Clarke
2058 Rayburn House Office Building
Washington DC 20515

Dear Representatives Lawler, Bishop, Salazar, and Clarke:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations, we are writing to strongly support the introduction of the “H-1Bs for the Physicians and Healthcare Workforce Act” (H.R. 7961). This bipartisan legislation would exempt physicians and other health professionals from the new \$100,000 H-1B fee, thereby ensuring patients continue to have access to the physicians and health care workers that millions of Americans depend on.

On September 19, 2025, the Trump Administration issued a Presidential Proclamation requiring employers to pay a \$100,000 fee for each new H-1B visa application. While the Proclamation provides the Secretary of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) with the authority to exempt certain individuals, or entire professions, when it is in the national interest, no physicians or other healthcare workers have been granted exemptions to date.

The consequences of this fee, and lack of exemptions, are already being felt. The added cost is causing health employers, including safety-net hospitals and other practices, to pause or abandon recruitment of physicians and other providers, recruitment that in many cases has been in progress for over a year. These employers, especially independent physician practices, many of which operate on razor-thin margins and serve the nation's most vulnerable populations, simply cannot absorb a six-figure fee on top of existing onboarding costs. Each month of delay translates directly into longer patient wait times, deferred care, and risks straining already overburdened emergency departments.

The health care workforce was already under growing strain prior to the imposition of this new fee. An aging population is driving rising demand for healthcare services, and many of the physicians currently serving rural and underserved communities are themselves nearing retirement, threatening to leave gaps in areas that are already critically short-staffed. Decades of insufficient investment in physician payment and graduate medical education continue to constrain the pipeline of new physicians needed to replace them. Today, more than 80 million Americans lack adequate access to primary care, exacerbating health disparities across the country, and with an estimated shortage of over 86,000 physicians in the next decade, these challenges are only expected to worsen.

International medical graduates are essential to a high-functioning U.S. healthcare system. They make up one in four practicing physicians in the country, disproportionately serving in rural and underserved communities and filling critical gaps in specialties facing persistent shortages. In many of these communities, an international medical graduate is the only physician available. Without these providers, many communities would have little to no access to the care patients depend on, and the fee is now actively undermining the pipeline that delivers them.

The “H-1Bs for the Physicians and Healthcare Workforce Act” is a narrowly tailored, commonsense solution. The bill ensures that physicians and other essential health care providers are not unnecessarily swept into a fee structure designed to address other workforce sectors.

Thank you for your leadership on this bipartisan legislation. Congress must act with urgency to advance this bill and ensure the pipeline for physicians and other health care workers remains strong. We look forward to working with you to protect patients’ access to care.

Sincerely,