



AMERICAN COLLEGE OF PHYSICIANS
INTERNAL MEDICINE | *Doctors for Adults*®

May 1, 2013

The Honorable Amy Klobuchar
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Klobuchar:

On behalf of the American College of Physicians (ACP), I am writing to support your efforts to expand and permanently reauthorize the Conrad State 30 J-1 visa waiver program through S. 616, the *Conrad State 30 and Physician Access Act*. The College is pleased that this legislation was incorporated into S. 744, the *Border Security, Economic Opportunity, and Immigration Modernization Act*, comprehensive immigration reform legislation that was introduced by a bipartisan group of Senators earlier this month.

ACP members include 133,000 internal medicine physicians (internists), related subspecialists, and medical students. Internal medicine physicians are specialists who apply scientific knowledge and clinical expertise to the diagnosis, treatment, and compassionate care of adults across the spectrum from health to complex illness.

The College has long recognized the value of international medical graduates (IMGs) and their contributions to health care delivery in this country. Many IMGs provide care in medically underserved areas by participating in J-1 visa waiver programs, including Conrad 30. We support your proposed reforms in S. 616 including, eliminating the need for repeated reauthorization of the Conrad 30 program. The College is also supportive of the provision in your legislation that will increase the number of Conrad 30 J-1 waivers to address the increased demand for such waivers by states, while maintaining a well-balanced national distribution. We are also pleased that you included our recommendation to allow a 120 day grace period for new employment if a physician is terminated due to extenuating circumstances. In addition, your proposed green card cap exemption would provide an important incentive for IMGs to practice in underserved communities.

Based on feedback from our members who are current or former Conrad State 30 participants, we continue to urge you to include the following additional changes to your legislation.

- Distribution of J-1 visa physicians in the most medically underserved areas based on the total population of the state instead of the current set number of 30 physicians per state regardless of need and population
- A mechanism to report and investigate possible work-related abuses encountered by IMG physicians without fear of retribution

ACP staff provided your office with legislative language in March of this year that would provide a remedy for physicians to report work-related abuses to authorities and we encourage you to incorporate this provision into immigration reform legislation that is expected to move through the Senate. While we are pleased to support S. 616, we also would like to encourage you to include our suggested recommendations. We look forward to working with you to advance S. 616 through Congress.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Molly Cooke". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Molly Cooke, MD, FACP
President