

Subject: Perdue, Durbin, Young, Coons To Introduce Bipartisan Bill Addressing Shortage Of Doctors, Nurses
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Lead Senate Effort To Strengthen Healthcare Workforce

ATLANTA, GA – U.S. Senators David Perdue (R-GA), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Todd Young (R-IN) and Chris Coons (D-DE) today announced they will introduce bipartisan legislation called the *Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act* to provide a temporary stopgap to quickly address our nation’s shortage of doctors and nurses, which poses a significant risk to our ability to effectively respond to the COVID-19 crisis.

The senators’ proposal, to be introduced when the Senate reconvenes, would recapture 25,000 unused immigrant visas for nurses and 15,000 unused immigrant visas for doctors that Congress has previously authorized and allocate those visas to doctors and nurses who can help in the fight against COVID-19. The proposal will not increase current immigration numbers.

“The growing shortage of doctors and nurses over the past decade has been exacerbated by the COVID-19 crisis,” **said Senator Perdue**. “Fortunately, there are thousands of trained health professionals who want to practice in the United States. This proposal would simply reallocate a limited number of unused visas from prior years for doctors and nurses who are qualified to help in our fight against COVID-19. This shortage is critical and needs immediate attention so that our healthcare facilities are not overwhelmed in this crisis.”

“Consider this: one-sixth of our health care workforce is foreign-born. Immigrant nurses and doctors play a vital role in our health care system, and their contributions are now more crucial than ever. Where would we be in this pandemic without them? It is unacceptable that thousands of doctors currently working in the U.S. on temporary visas are stuck in the green card backlog, putting their futures in jeopardy and limiting their ability to contribute to the fight against COVID-19,” **said Senator Durbin**. “This bipartisan, targeted, and timely legislation will strengthen our health care workforce and improve health care access for Americans in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic. I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support these vital health care workers.”

“The U.S. Department of Labor has declared that we have a shortage of nurses and need the support of trained professionals from other countries. This is especially true in rural parts of our country that are too often overlooked. I have been working to remove unnecessary barriers for nurses to get visas to come to the United States and help us combat coronavirus, the opioid crisis, and other health challenges. This legislation will help address our immediate healthcare needs during this unprecedented crisis,” **said Senator Young**.

“American health care workers are on the frontlines of the COVID-19 pandemic, putting their lives at risk to care for our loved ones,” **said Senator Coons**. “This commonsense, bipartisan bill would provide reinforcements in the fight against the virus by targeting doctors and nurses stuck in the green card backlog for immediate relief. This narrow solution will not fix our broken immigration system, but it will help prevent its dysfunction from blocking medical professionals who can help give patients across the country the care they urgently need.”

Specifically, the senators’ proposal:

- Recaptures unused visas from previous fiscal years for doctors, nurses, and their families
- Exempts these visas from country caps
- Requires employers to attest that immigrants from overseas who receive these visas will not displace an American worker
- Requires the Department of Homeland Security and State Department to expedite the processing of recaptured visas
- Limits the filing period for recaptured visas to 90 days following the termination of the President’s COVID-19 emergency declaration

Read the text of the bill [here](#).

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