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April 10, 2020

The Honorable Roy Blunt
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Senator Blunt,

We are writing on behalf of American-trained international physicians and the Missouri patients who have been cared for in Missouri by these physicians for many years. There are about 2,000 international physicians who are on a H-1B work visa / J1- waiver / Conrad 30 program. The majority of these physicians work in Medically Underserved Areas (MUA) / Healthcare Professional Shortage Areas (HPSA) / academic medical research institutions and rural American communities. They are in the frontline fighting against deadly pandemic COVID-19.

We want to bring to your attention that these international physicians can only work for the employer who sponsors their H-1B visa, and in only one specific location as mentioned in their application to USCIS (U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services). It makes it very difficult for these well-trained physicians to assist communities in need. There are thousands of international physicians who are restricted by visa limitations all over the U.S.

Another issue these American-trained international physicians are facing is that if the primary H-1B petitioner (physician) becomes incapacitated and unable to work, then the physician with the visa and his immediate dependents (spouse and children who are not U.S. citizens) will immediately become out of status and have to leave the U.S. We request leniency from USCIS to promote maximum patient care.

We request you contact Kenneth Cuccinelli, Acting Director of U.S. Citizen and Immigration Services to "INCREASE THE ACCESS TO THESE PHYSICIANS" by removing the employer-based H-1B visa work restrictions during the COVID-19 health emergency. This will allow these American-trained international physicians to expand the geographical radius of services and help fellow Americans fight this deadly COVID-19 pandemic. We have fully trained and experienced physicians who are willing to help but cannot because of visa restrictions.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "George Hruza MD".

George J. Hruza, MD, MBA, FAAD
President