

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

February 11, 2026

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary of Homeland Security
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Noem:

We are deeply concerned about the impact of the September 19 Presidential Proclamation, “Restriction on Entry of Certain Nonimmigrant Workers,” on the health care workforce. The Proclamation imposes a \$100,000 fee on employers that petition for a new H-1B visa, but also recognizes the Department of Homeland Security Secretary’s authority to grant sector-wide exemptions, so long as it “is in the national interest and does not pose a threat to the security or welfare of the United States.” We urge you to create a health care sector exemption to prevent additional strain on the health care workforce.

Worsening workforce shortages across all health care professions are significantly diminishing access to care in rural and urban communities across the nation. According to the Health Resources and Services Administration, nearly 87 million Americans live in areas Federally designated as lacking enough medical professionals to address the community’s health care needs.¹ Physician demand could exceed supply by up to 86,000 in the next decade and clinical laboratory science programs are educating less than half the number of clinical laboratory professionals needed.^{2 3} These shortages cannot be filled by the domestic workforce alone, and projections will worsen if health care employers cannot continue to recruit and retain international health care workers.

For over 30 years, health care employers have used the H-1B visa program to recruit and retain the finest international talent, positioning the US as a global leader in health care delivery and innovation. Many members of the care team—including highly skilled physicians, advanced practice professionals, clinical laboratory workers, and researchers—come to the U.S. from around the world to offer specialized services, deliver care in underserved areas, and contribute to cutting-edge biomedical research.

Health care organizations must be able to recruit staff in the most cost-effective manner so they can use their financial resources to hire as many caregivers as possible to take care of their communities. Rural hospitals and urban safety net hospitals face uncommon recruitment and retention issues and will most acutely feel the effects of the \$100,000 fee. These hospitals rely

¹ HRSA. *Fourth Quarter Summary of Fiscal Year 2025 Designated HPSA Quarterly Summary*. September 30.

² <https://www.aamc.org/media/75236/download?attachment>

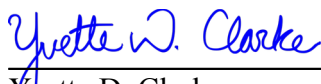
³ GNYHA Position Paper: Hospitals and Other Health Care Organizations Should Be Exempt from the H-1B Visa Fee.

heavily on the H-1B visa to maintain adequate staffing and offer comprehensive services in high-need areas. 21 million Americans live in areas where foreign-trained physicians account for at least half of all practicing physicians.⁴

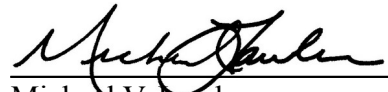
Imposing a \$100,000 fee for new H-1B visa petitions will exacerbate hospitals' existing staffing challenges and could push chronically underfunded hospitals to their financial brink. If these hospitals cannot petition for new H-1B visas to address their staffing needs without also having to pay this fee, it will further damage their financial viability. Critically needed open positions will simply go unfilled, leaving rural and high-poverty urban areas without adequate access to care.

We strongly urge you to exempt the health care sector from this burdensome fee. Thank you for considering our request.

Sincerely,



Yvette D. Clarke
Member of Congress



Michael V. Lawler
Member of Congress



Lori Trahan
Member of Congress



Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress



Madeleine Dean
Member of Congress



Frank J. Mrvan
Member of Congress



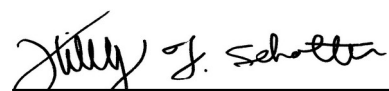
Grace Meng
Member of Congress



John W. Mannion
Member of Congress

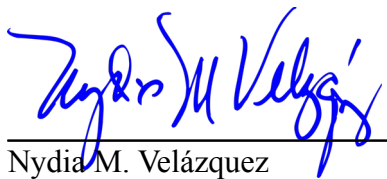


Dan Goldman
Member of Congress

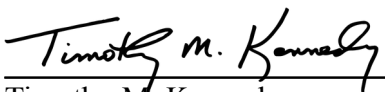


Hillary J. Scholten
Member of Congress

⁴ <https://www.ama-assn.org/health-care-advocacy/advocacy-update/oct-3-2025-national-advocacy-update>



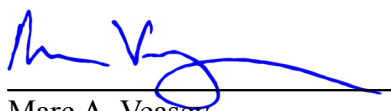
Nydia M. Velázquez
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Timothy M. Kennedy
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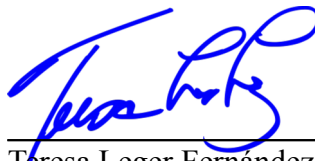
Bradley Scott Schneider
Member of Congress



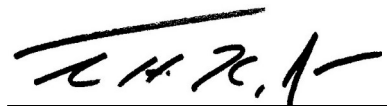
Marc A. Veasey
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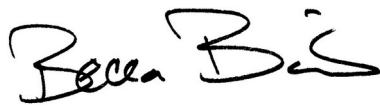
Raja Krishnamoorthi
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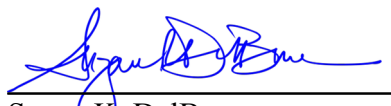
Jasmine Crockett
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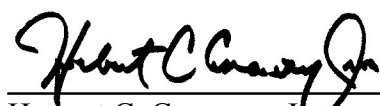
Becca Balint
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Suzan K. DelBene
Member of Congress



Ted W. Lieu
Member of Congress



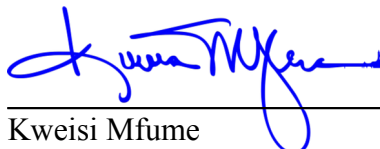
Herbert C. Conaway, Jr.
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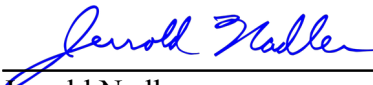
Terri A. Sewell
Member of Congress



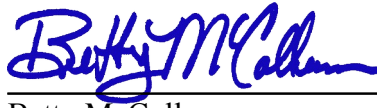
Laura Friedman
Member of Congress



Kweisi Mfume
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Jerrold Nadler
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Betty McCollum
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Doris Matsui
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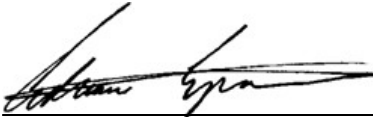
George Latimer
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Laura A. Gillen
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Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



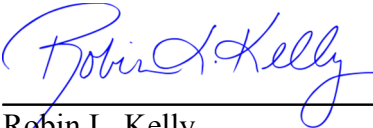
Adriano Espaillat
Member of Congress



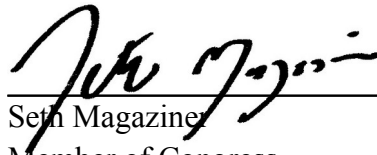
Patrick Ryan
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Brian K. Fitzpatrick
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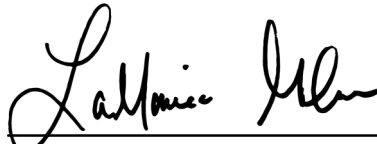
Seth Magaziner
Member of Congress



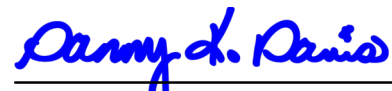
Donald G. Davis
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Melanie Stansbury
Member of Congress



LaMonica McIver
Member of Congress



Danny K. Davis
Member of Congress



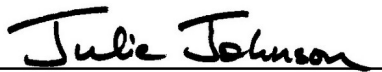
Josh Riley
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Ami Bera, M.D.
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Eric Swalwell
Member of Congress



Julie Johnson
Member of Congress



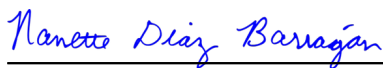
Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez
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Mike Thompson
Member of Congress



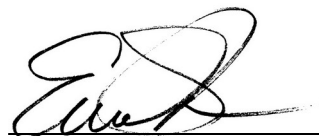
Joseph D. Morelle
Member of Congress



Nanette Diaz Barragán
Member of Congress



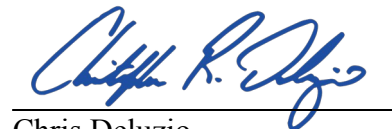
Mary Gay Scanlon
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Emilia Strong Sykes
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



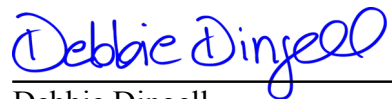
Chris Deluzio
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Ritchie Torres
Member of Congress



Valerie P. Foushee
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Debbie Dingell
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Maggie Goodlander
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Lloyd Doggett
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Thomas R. Suozzi
Member of Congress



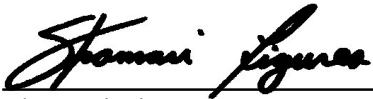
Vicente Gonzalez
Member of Congress



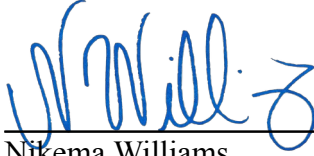
Veronica Escobar
Member of Congress



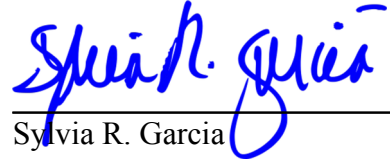
Paul Tonko
Member of Congress



Shomari Figures
Member of Congress



Nikema Williams
Member of Congress



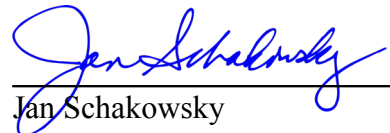
Sylvia R. Garcia
Member of Congress



Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress



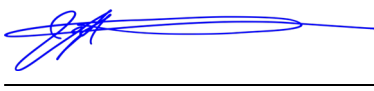
Chris Pappas
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Jan Schakowsky
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Maxine Dexter
Member of Congress



Jefferson Van Drew
Member of Congress



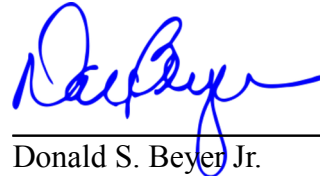
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



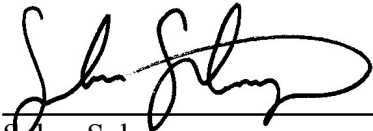
Bill Foster
Member of Congress



Lucy McBath
Member of Congress



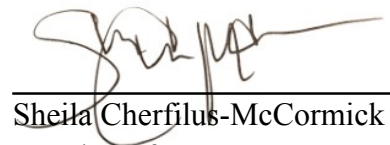
Donald S. Beyer Jr.
Member of Congress



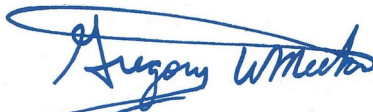
Suhas Subramanyam
Member of Congress



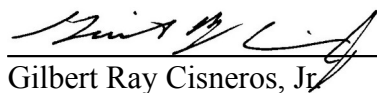
SETH MOULTON
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Sheila Cherfilus-McCormick
Member of Congress



Gregory W. Meeks
Member of Congress



Gilbert Ray Cisneros, Jr.
Member of Congress



Dina Titus
Member of Congress



Emanuel Cleaver, II
Member of Congress



Brendan F. Boyle
Member of Congress



Shri Thanedar
Member of Congress



Nellie Pou
Member of Congress



Joaquin Castro
Member of Congress



Wesley Bell
Member of Congress



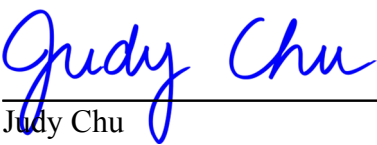
Eleanor Holmes Norton
Member of Congress



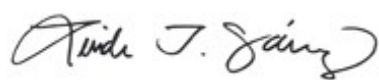
Andre Carson
Member of Congress



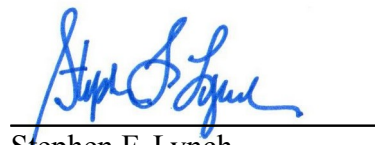
Henry C. "Hank" Johnson, Jr.
Member of Congress



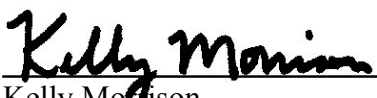
Judy Chu
Member of Congress



Linda T. Sánchez
Member of Congress



Stephen F. Lynch
Member of Congress



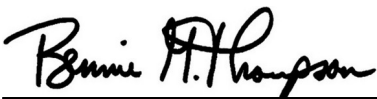
Kelly Morrison
Member of Congress



Zoe Lofgren
Member of Congress



James R. Walkinshaw
Member of Congress



Bennie G. Thompson
Member of Congress



Robert J. Menendez
Member of Congress