

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 25, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin Luther King, Jr. Avenue, S.E.
Washington, D.C., 20528

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street N.W.
Washington, D.C., 20415

Dear Secretary Noem and Secretary Rubio,

We are writing regarding President Trump's recent White House Proclamation making changes to the H-1B application process. It requires companies, including hospitals and healthcare systems, to pay a \$100,000 fee for all new visa applications submitted after 12:01am on September 21, 2025. We are deeply concerned about this decision and the impact it will have on access to healthcare in Michigan.

As you know, the H-1B visa category was created in 1990 to address workforce needs, and it allows U.S. employers to temporarily hire foreign skilled workers in "specialty occupations" that require at least a bachelor's degree or the equivalent across sectors including healthcare, technology, and finance.¹ Since its creation, it has been capped annually by Congress at 65,000 visas, with 20,000 additional for foreign professionals with a master's or doctorate degree from a U.S. institution.

We deeply understand the importance of investing in American workers, supporting high-paying American job opportunities, and strengthening the STEM pipeline. However, some industries—like the healthcare industry—struggle to recruit workers for positions in rural or underserved communities and rely on the H-1B visa program to fill critical gaps. As hospitals continue to face severe shortages of healthcare workers, this program has played an essential role in allowing them to recruit highly-skilled healthcare professionals to ensure that patients' access to care is not disrupted. This has been particularly important for rural and underserved communities that have historically faced significant barriers to accessing the care they need.²

In Michigan, our local hospitals depend on the H-1B program to fill primary care and specialty physician positions that would otherwise go unfilled, especially in underserved communities. Between 2016 and 2025, 5,800 individuals received H-1B visas in "healthcare and social services" professions in Michigan, according to data from USCIS.³ Our state's healthcare staffing needs will only continue to rise. In March 2025, Michigan hospitals reported more than 19,000 job openings including more than 1,200 physician openings. The Association of American Medical Colleges predicts that the national shortage of primary care physicians will be

¹ [What to Know about Trump's H-1B Visa Shakeup, NBC News.](#)

² [White House Announces Changes to H-1B Visa Program, American Hospital Association.](#)

³ [Map Shows Health Care H-1B Visas By State As Trump Floats Fee Exemption, Newsweek.](#)

between 20,200 and 40,400 by 2036.⁴ Further, most counties in Michigan have been designated as primary care “Health Professional Shortage Areas,” meaning patients must travel long distances to receive care or potentially not seek care at all.

Dr. Bobby Mukkamala, a Michigan physician and president of the American Medical Association, has stated President Trump’s plan, “risks shutting off the pipeline of highly trained physicians that patients depend on, especially in rural and underserved communities.”⁵

While the devastating impacts of this new fee may not be felt across the healthcare sector immediately, we are deeply concerned it would endanger access to primary care in underserved communities across Michigan and the entire nation over time. Although current visa holders and those applying for renewals would not be subject to the \$100,000 fee, hospitals in Michigan will have to eventually fill open positions as healthcare professionals retire or choose not to renew their existing visas. This cost is likely to exceed \$14 million annually. This policy change would restrict hospitals’ ability to invest in caring for already-underserved communities, and instead require them to pay an exorbitant amount to fill critical roles just to maintain patients’ access to care. In fact, the amount hospitals would have to spend for even one H-1B applicant could be more than half the salary of a primary care doctor.

White House spokesperson Taylor Rogers has recently said in an email, “The Proclamation allows for potential exemptions, which can include physicians and medical residents.”⁶ As you move forward with the 2026 lottery cycle, we urge you to seriously consider adopting this exemption, especially as communities across the nation are already experiencing severe shortages of healthcare workers.

Limiting primary care access has damaging cascading consequences. People who have restricted access or go without primary care are more likely to develop serious illnesses and die earlier than they would if they had a primary care provider.⁷ When people lose access to care, they do not stop needing healthcare. Instead, they show up later on with more acute conditions, leading to higher healthcare costs. Access to primary care is essential to both keeping communities healthy and to avoiding high-cost medical services that increase costs for everyone.

This fee is causing serious concerns for hospitals and other employers that utilize the program, and we urge you to seriously consider the impacts this decision will have on healthcare access across America—particularly in communities that are already underserved. We also urge you to offer clear guidance on how this proclamation plans to be implemented and more information regarding exemptions. As we work to bolster our domestic healthcare workforce, Congress and the administration should work together to ensure that H-1B continues to serve as a backstop to avoid communities losing further access to care.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

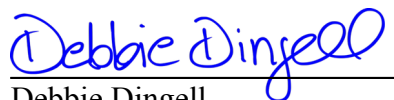
⁴ [The Complexities of Physician Supply and Demand: Projections From 2021 to 2026, AAMC.](#)

⁵ [Map Shows Health Care H-1B Visas By State As Trump Floats Fee Exemption, Newsweek.](#)

⁶ <https://x.com/PressSec/status/1969495900478488745>

⁷ [Faculty View: Michigan Needs More Primary Care Doctors, Michigan State University.](#)

Sincerely,



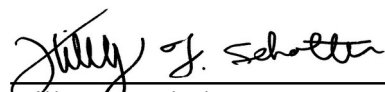
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Member of Congress



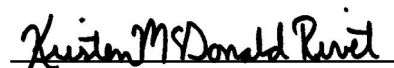
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