



World Education Services Statement of Support for HB 995

World Education Services (WES) supports HB 995, which would expand pathways for eligible internationally trained physicians to practice medicine in Virginia.

World Education Services (WES) is a non-profit social enterprise that supports the educational, economic, and social inclusion of immigrants, refugees, and international students. For 50 years, WES has set the standard for international academic credential evaluation, supporting millions of people as they seek to achieve their academic and professional goals. Through decades of experience as a leader in global education, WES has developed a wide range of tools to pursue social impact at scale. From evaluating academic credentials to shaping policy, designing programs, and providing philanthropic funding, we partner with a diverse set of organizations, leaders, and networks to uplift individuals and drive systems change. Together with its partners, WES enables people to learn, work, and thrive in new places.

The Migration Policy Institute (MPI) estimates that, as of 2020, 165,000 immigrant and refugee health care workers who hold health-related degrees from another country were unemployed or underemployed in the U.S. Among them 4,000 lived in Virginia.¹

According to the American Immigration Council, Virginia is expected to have a shortage of 1,622 primary care physicians by 2030 to address the health care needs of its residents.² Data collected by the Health Resources and Services Administration indicates that more than 2.6 million people are affected by access to care in Virginia's 160 federally designated primary care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs).³ In addition, job postings for bilingual health care workers in the state increased by nearly 39 percent between 2017 and 2021.⁴

¹ Jeanne Batalova and Michael Fix, "As U.S. Health-Care System Buckles under Pandemic, Immigrant & Refugee Professionals Could Represent a Critical Resource," Migration Policy Institute, April 2020, <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/news/us-health-care-system-coronavirus-immigrant-professionals-untapped-resource>

² "Virginia: Projecting Primary Care Physician Workforce," Robert Graham Center, <https://www.aafp.org/dam/rgc/documents/maps-data-tools/state-collections/workforce-projections/Virginia.pdf>.

³ "Designated Health Professional Shortage Areas Statistics: First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2024 Designated HPSA Quarterly Summary." Bureau of Health Workforce, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, December 31, 2023. <https://data.hrsa.gov/default/generatehpsaquarterlyreport>.

⁴ Stephen M. Petterson, Angela Cai, Miranda Moore, and Andrew Bazemore, "Virginia: Projecting Primary Care Physician Workforce, 2010-2030," Robert Graham Center, September 2013,

Commented [MN1]: @Natalie Torres normally would change to IMGs but leaving "physician" in here because that's what's used in the bill. Let me know if you want it changed though.

Commented [NT2R1]: Nope that's why I used it

Commented [NT3]: This is taken directly as was written in a 2023 statement of support, but this data is from 2020 - should we say, "As of 2020,..." and make this paragraph past tense?

Commented [MN4]: reword

Commented [MN5]: Word choice (double "need" in sentence)

Commented [MN6]: @Natalie Torres This should cite the source of the information, in this case <https://www.aafp.org/dam/rgc/documents/maps-data-tools/state-collections/workforce-projections/Virginia.pdf> (AIC didn't analyze or interpret this -it's straight from the other source)

Commented [NT7R6]: Thank you! Will fix

Commented [NT8R6]: @Mia Nacamulli Done!



Immigrants and refugees with a background in health care are well-positioned to help address employment gaps, offering in-demand skills and multilingual abilities. Their perspective and knowledge of different cultures is also an asset: Studies have found that patient outcomes improve when health care teams are more diverse.⁵

HB 995 will help address Virginia's physician shortage, ensure a more diverse health workforce, and promote access to quality care for all Virginians by making licensing pathways more accessible for internationally trained physicians in the state.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement of support.

https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/sites/default/files/growing_demand_healthcare_workers_virginia.pdf.

⁵ Gomez, L E, and Patrick Bernet. "Diversity improves performance and outcomes," National Library of Medicine, National Institutes of Health, August 2019. <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/30765101>.

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