

September 14, 2022

The Honorable Alex Padilla
Chair
Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and
Border Safety
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable John Cornyn
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Immigration, Citizenship, and
Border Safety
Senate Committee on the Judiciary
224 Dirksen Senate Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Padilla and Ranking Member Cornyn:

Thank you for holding today's hearing, entitled *Flatlining Care: Why Immigrants Are Crucial to Bolstering Our Health Care Workforce*.

The National Hospice and Palliative Care Organization, a membership organization of more than 4,000 hospice locations representing nearly 60,000 hospice professionals and hundreds of thousands of volunteers dedicated to caring for patients and families across the country, sincerely appreciates the Subcommittee's attention to important issues impacting our nation's health care workforce.

Hospice and palliative care have been facing pervasive labor shortages for years. Unfortunately, we have recently seen hospices close and heard of patient referrals being denied due to inadequate staffing. Federal action is needed to ensure that individuals with serious and life-limiting illness can continue to access quality end-of-life care in the years to come. As an organization, NHPCO has supported several legislative proposals aimed at alleviating these shortages – including efforts to improve immigration policies and make it easier for trained health professionals to work in the United States.

NHPCO is proud to have endorsed the *Healthcare Workforce Resilience Act* (S. 1024), introduced by Ranking Member Cornyn. This legislation allows U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services to “recapture” unused work visas, enabling up to 25,000 nurses and up to 15,000 doctors to apply for visas.

Immigrants are an integral part of the health care workforce. However, current immigration processes are labor- and time-intensive, which hinders hospices' ability to recruit and retain from this workforce. Training and education pathways must be built into immigration policies. We need to renew a pathway specifically for those with a health background and training to come and work in the United States. Failing to fix our current system could result in more eligible patients dying while waiting for hospice care without enough professionals to provide it.

We are grateful for your leadership and recognition of the important role immigrants play in our health care workforce. Should you have any questions, please don't hesitate to reach out to Logan Hoover, Vice President of Policy and Government Relations (lhoover@nhpco.org).

Sincerely,



Ben Marcantonio
COO and Interim CEO