

Tom Bottem, Director

Minnesota Senate Building
95 University Ave. W. Suite 3300
ST. PAUL, MN 55155-1800
(651) 296-4791
www.senate.mn/scrfa

S.F. No. 3201 – Recommendation for the J-1 visa waiver program

Author: Senator Jeff Howe

Prepared by: Katie Cavanor, Senate Counsel (651/296-3801)

Date: March 25, 2022

SF3201 [Direction to commissioner of health; J-1 visa waiver program recommendation]

requires the commissioner of health, in issuing recommendations for the purposes of the J-1 visa waiver program, to allow a foreign medical graduate to submit to the commissioner evidence that the applicant for whom the waiver is sought holds a current H-1B visa in place of evidence that the foreign medical graduate has passed steps 1, 2, and 3 of the United States Medical Licensing Examination.

The J-1 visa waiver program is administered by the U.S. State Department. Under this program, a foreign medical graduate may seek a waiver from the requirement that the graduate return to the graduate's home country for two years after the end of their medical studies before applying for authorization to work in the United States. If a waiver is granted, the recipient is required to work in underserved areas. The commissioner of health makes up to 30 recommendations per year for the wavier program. One of the requirements for applying for a waiver is that the applicant has passed steps 1, 2, and 3 of the U.S. Medical Licensing Examination (USMLE). This bill would require the commissioner of health to accept evidence of the applicant holding a current H-1B visa instead of requiring the applicant to submit evidence of passing the USMLE.