



World Education Services Statement of Support for SF 3611

World Education Services (WES) supports SF 3611, which would expand pathways for eligible internationally trained physicians to practice medicine in Minnesota.

The United States currently faces a serious shortage of practicing physicians¹ in both primary and specialty care—a gap that is projected to deepen over the coming decade. States across the country are seeking solutions to ensure that all citizens, especially those in rural and underserved communities, have sufficient access to medical care. In Minnesota, more than 1.5 million people in 219 federally designated primary care Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs) are affected by insufficient access to medical services. Minnesota already requires an additional 214 primary care practitioners to meet existing need,² a shortfall projected to grow significantly by 2030.³

Internationally trained physicians are well-positioned to help alleviate primary and specialty care shortages. Their cultural competence is also an asset, as studies have found that patient outcomes improve when health care teams are more diverse.⁴ Yet systemic barriers prevent many internationally trained physicians from being able to practice medicine in the U.S. Legislation expanding pathways to medical licensure for internationally trained physicians allows states to benefit from the education, skills, and experience of a larger pool of qualified practitioners.

SF 3611 will help address Minnesota's physician shortage, ensure a more diverse health workforce, and promote access to quality care for all Minnesotans by making licensing pathways more accessible for internationally trained physicians in the state.

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

¹ "AAMC Report Reinforces Mounting Physician Shortage," June 11, 2021. American Association of Medical Colleges. <https://www.aamc.org/news/press-releases/aamc-report-reinforces-mounting-physician-shortage>

² "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>.

³ "Minnesota: Projecting Primary Care Physician Workforce," Robert Graham Center.

<https://www.aafp.org/dam/rgc/documents/maps-data-tools/state-collections/workforce-projections/Minnesota.pdf>.

⁴ 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>.



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.