

One Hundred Eighth Congress
of the
United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Tuesday,
the twentieth day of January, two thousand and four*

An Act

To improve access to physicians in medically underserved areas.

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of
the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

**SECTION 1. MODIFICATION OF VISA REQUIREMENTS WITH RESPECT
TO INTERNATIONAL MEDICAL GRADUATES.**

(a) EXTENSION OF DEADLINE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Section 220(c) of the Immigration and Nationality Technical Corrections Act of 1994 (8 U.S.C. 1182 note) (as amended by section 11018 of Public Law 107–273) is amended by striking “2004.” and inserting “2006.”.

(2) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by paragraph (1) shall take effect as if enacted on May 31, 2004.

(b) EXEMPTION FROM H–1B NUMERICAL LIMITATIONS.—Section 214(l)(2)(A) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(l)(2)(A)) is amended by adding at the end the following: “The numerical limitations contained in subsection (g)(1)(A) shall not apply to any alien whose status is changed under the preceding sentence, if the alien obtained a waiver of the 2-year foreign residence requirement upon a request by an interested Federal agency or an interested State agency.”.

(c) LIMITATION ON MEDICAL PRACTICE AREAS.—Section 214(l)(1)(D) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(l)(1)(D)) is amended by striking “agrees to practice medicine” and inserting “agrees to practice primary care or specialty medicine”.

(d) EXEMPTIONS.—Section 214(l)(1)(D) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1184(l)(1)(D)) is further amended—

(1) by striking “except that,” and all that follows and inserting “except that—”; and

(2) by adding at the end the following:

“(i) in the case of a request by the Department of Veterans Affairs, the alien shall not be required to practice medicine in a geographic area designated by the Secretary;

“(ii) in the case of a request by an interested State agency, the head of such State agency determines that the alien is to practice medicine under such agreement in a facility that serves patients who reside in one or more geographic areas so designated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services (without regard to whether such facility is located within such a designated geographic area), and the grant of such waiver would not cause the number of the waivers granted on behalf of aliens for such State for a fiscal year (within the limitation in

subparagraph (B)) in accordance with the conditions of this clause to exceed 5; and

“(iii) in the case of a request by an interested Federal agency or by an interested State agency for a waiver for an alien who agrees to practice specialty medicine in a facility located in a geographic area so designated by the Secretary of Health and Human Services, the request shall demonstrate, based on criteria established by such agency, that there is a shortage of health care professionals able to provide services in the appropriate medical specialty to the patients who will be served by the alien.”.

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

*Vice President of the United States and
President of the Senate.*