



American Society of Pediatric Nephrology

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October 14, 2025

The Honorable Kristi Noem
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
2707 Martin L. King Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20528

Dear Secretary Noem:

On behalf of the American Society of Pediatric Nephrology (ASPN), I am writing to urge you to grant an exemption to physicians from the President's Proclamation on Restrictions on Entry of Certain Non-immigrant Workers, and to issue guidance that determines that H-1B physicians' entry into the United States is critical for our national security. An exemption is critical due to the shortage of U.S. citizen physicians to care for children with kidney disease.

Founded in 1969, ASPN is a professional society composed of pediatric nephrologists whose goal is to promote optimal care for children with kidney disease and to disseminate advances in the clinical practice and basic science of pediatric nephrology. ASPN currently has over 700 members, making it the primary representative of the Pediatric Nephrology community in North America.

The Proclamation imposed a new \$100,000 fee on applications for all new H-1B visas beginning on September 21, 2025; this fee will no doubt make it impossible for those interested in joining the physician workforce in our country to do so. Section 1(c) of the Proclamation gives the Secretary discretion to grant an exemption for an industry if it is determined that "the hiring of such aliens to be employed as H-1B specialty occupation workers is in the national interest and does not pose a threat to the security or welfare of the United States." We urge you to use this discretion to clarify that all physicians, including but not limited to medical residents, postdoctoral researchers and graduate students, are critical to our national security and exempt from the fee.

H-1B visas are utilized by medical residents, physicians, postdoctoral researchers and graduate students each year who work and train in the U.S. Without these visas, it will be impossible for these medical professionals to provide essential health care services in our communities. Non-citizen physicians are critical to ensuring all Americans have access to care, including children with kidney disease; there are simply not enough U.S. citizen physicians to meet the needs of the U.S. population. Like many other pediatric subspecialties, pediatric nephrology is facing a significant physician shortage. From 2014 to 2022, only 66% of pediatric nephrology fellowship training slots were filled, the lowest of all 15 pediatric subspecialties. In 2024, fellowship

applicants decreased by nearly 30% with only 29 trainees matching with programs for a fill rate of 37%.¹ Children with kidney disease in the United States currently rely, and for the foreseeable future will continue to rely on, non-citizen pediatric nephrologists, and the shortage of citizen physicians is only growing worse over time.

ASPN is also concerned that this new \$100,000 fee will exacerbate the health care access challenges faced by Americans living in rural areas. Foreign medical specialty graduates often are willing to live and work in rural areas underserved by the U.S. physician workforce, and they frequently take up long-term residence in these areas and come to serve as important medical resources in the communities they serve.

In order to ensure that the U.S. remains a global leader in biomedical research and to ensure that all patients have access to quality care, we urge the administration to grant an exemption to the Proclamation for physicians. Please reach out to Stefanie Rinehart at srinehart@dc-crd.com if you have any questions or if we can provide additional information.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Meredith Atkinson', is positioned above the printed name.

Meredith Atkinson
President

¹<https://www.healio.com/news/nephrology/20250207/nni0325weidemannfirstwordfinal#:~:text=During%20an%208%2Dyear%20period,a%20fill%20rate%20of%2037%25>.