



June 13, 2025

The Honorable Marco Rubio  
Secretary of State  
U.S. Department of State  
2201 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of the American Society of Nephrology (ASN), I urge you to reconsider the U.S. Department of State's decision to pause all new student and exchange visa interviews for physicians in training. This pause will have disastrous consequences for the health of millions of Americans across the nation who rely daily on international medical graduates (IMGs) for life-saving care.

ASN urges you to exempt physicians from the State Department's pause, as for participants in the 2026 World Cup and 2028 Olympics.<sup>i</sup> **Specifically, ASN requests that the Department of State exempt all J-1 IMG visa applicants from the pause, and instead, expedite visa processing and related vetting for this critical group.**

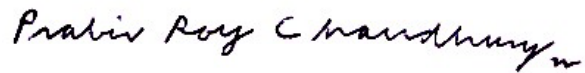
IMGs training in U.S. residencies and fellowships care for millions of Americans across the nation. They represent one in four US physicians, more than 50% of the nephrologists in the United States, and nearly two-thirds of nephrology fellows. The pause threatens to delay the arrival of one-third of all physicians and surgeons scheduled to begin their training as residents and fellows on Tuesday, July 1, 2025. The lives of millions of Americans—including over 37 million Americans living with kidney diseases—depend on your exempting IMGs from the State Department's pause: approximately 40% of incoming nephrology fellows who will provide their care are IMGs.

It is also important to note that 120,000 residents and fellows receive some or all their training in Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) Medical Centers, which means that our veterans' care will be disproportionately affected by the pause. The VA is the largest healthcare training system in the United States, and many physicians who train in the VA stay in the VA, committed to caring for U.S. veterans.

In closing, ASN recognizes the importance of national security and the need to thoroughly vet visa applicants. However, the medical profession, in general, and physicians in residency and fellowship training, in particular, are more highly regulated than most—if not all—other professions. Specifically, ASN requests that the Department of State exempt all J-1 IMG visa applicants from the pause, and instead, expedite visa processing and related vetting for this critical group.

Besides making this request, ASN offers to provide expert input and help however possible as the State Department works to ensure Americans continue to have access to care provided by IMGs before, on, and after, July 1, 2025. To discuss this letter, ASN's position on this issue, or the society, please contact ASN Executive Vice President Tod Ibrahim at [tibrahim@asn-online.org](mailto:tibrahim@asn-online.org).

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Prabir Roy Chaudhury". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Prabir Roy-Chaudhury, MD, PhD, FASN  
President

---

<sup>i</sup> RESTRICTING THE ENTRY OF FOREIGN NATIONALS TO PROTECT THE UNITED STATES FROM FOREIGN TERRORISTS AND OTHER NATIONAL SECURITY AND PUBLIC SAFETY THREATS. Section 4 (iv). June 4, 2025. <https://www.whitehouse.gov/presidential-actions/2025/06/restricting-the-entry-of-foreign-nationals-to-protect-the-united-states-from-foreign-terrorists-and-other-national-security-and-public-safety-threats/>