

## MEMORANDUM

To: House Committee on Health Care  
From: Commissioner Kendal Smith, Vermont Department of Labor  
Date: April 10, 2026  
Subject: S.142, *An act relating to a pathway to licensure for internationally trained physicians and medical graduates*

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The Vermont Department of Labor supports creating a clear pathway to better engage internationally trained physicians and medical graduates in our labor force, as contemplated in S.142, *An act relating to a pathway to licensure for internationally trained physicians and medical graduates*.

The Administration, Legislature, and critical partners, such as the Office of Professional Regulation, have a strong track record of working collaboratively to strike the right balance among professional licensure requirements, workforce needs, and consumer protection. Together, we have advanced thoughtful reforms that maintain high standards while reducing unnecessary barriers to entry.

Recent efforts over the past eight years that reflect this shared commitment include: recognizing certain military training and credentials for civilian licensure, including in health care fields; establishing one of the most progressive licensure recognition frameworks in the country to support workforce mobility; entering into interstate licensure compacts to expand reciprocity and access; second chance determinations; and more. Each of these initiatives has helped modernize our systems while preserving public trust and safety.

The spirit of S.142 represents a natural and appropriate next step in this work, given our border with Canada and our ongoing commitment to supporting New Americans in fully utilizing their backgrounds and expertise. For the occupations the Board of Medical Practices licenses, the state is seeing clear growth opportunities and needs for these high-paying jobs. For example, based on data from the Division of Economic & Labor Market Information:



| Job Title                            | Annual Growth Rate* | Annual Job Openings | Median Wage 2024** |
|--------------------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|
| Physician Assistants                 | 2.3%                | 29                  | \$66.64            |
| Nurse Anesthetists                   | 1.4%                | 3                   | \$115.00+          |
| Anesthesiologists                    | 0.2%                | 1                   | n/a                |
| Emergency Medicine Physicians        | 0.2%                | 3                   | \$115.00+          |
| Family Medicine Physicians           | -0.1%               | 10                  | \$112.10           |
| General Internal Medicine Physicians | 0.1%                | 4                   | \$110.02           |

\* Compound average

\*\* Hourly except as noted

- *Podiatrists (DPMs) – we are not able to release occupational projections because it is a small occupation in VT (less than 20 in 2024); wage data available here: <https://www.vtmi.info/oic3.cfm?occcode=29-1081.00>*
- *Note: The Department acknowledges that this list does not include many occupations; due to confidentiality, they cannot be shared because of the small number of individuals in the occupations. We have, however, heard that employers say the need is even greater than what is listed here.*

Taken together, these projections underscore a clear and growing demand for highly trained medical professionals across Vermont. While in-state training and recruitment remain critical, these workforce gaps also present an opportunity to look beyond our borders to meet pressing healthcare needs.

Vermont shares a special relationship with the people of Quebec, Canada. Many Vermonters and Canadians cross the border daily for work and recreation. In November 2025, Quebec passed a controversial healthcare bill, Bill 2, which linked doctors’ compensation to performance targets, prompting many to consider practicing elsewhere. Per a news report in November 2025, “...the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario said it received 285 applications since Oct. 23 – including more than 20 in the past two days – from Quebec doctors looking to practice in Ontario.”<sup>1</sup> Bill 2 has since been reconsidered with an amended law that went into effect in February of 2026<sup>2</sup>. However, this highlights a mobile talent pool we could attract to support work in our health care settings in Vermont.

Across all sectors, we have critical workforce gaps, and there is an urgency to identify new and innovative pathways to fill them. As the House Health Care Committee contemplates S.142, VDOL is not advocating for, or tied to specific language to achieve the outcome of better

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/ottawa/number-of-doctors-planning-to-leave-quebec-grows-9.6976636#:~:text=Ottawa-.Concerns%20mount%20as%20more%20doctors%20eye%20exit%20from%20Quebec%20health.care%20professionals%20from%20that%20province.>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/montreal/quebec-belanger-tables-bill-family-doctors-pay-9.7074188>



engaging internationally trained physicians in our healthcare workforce— as there may be multiple ways to get there pending other witness testimony. We do, however, strongly support you moving this bill.

Lastly, should S.142 become law, we must promote what we do, so healthcare professionals either relocating to Vermont or interested in crossing the border to work here understand the tools and options available to them. VDOL stands ready to support implementation and outreach to ensure its success.

