



World Education Services Statement of Support for S 142

World Education Services (WES) reaffirms its support for S 142, which would create an alternative pathway to medical licensure for eligible internationally trained physicians to practice medicine in Vermont.

The United States currently faces a serious shortage of practicing physicians¹ in both primary and specialty care—a gap that is projected to widen over the coming decade. States across the country are seeking a way to ensure that all citizens, especially those in rural and underserved communities, have sufficient access to medical care. Vermont faces a critical shortage of primary care providers—115 FTEs below national benchmarks in 2022, with projections rising to a 370 FTE deficit by 2030 across family medicine, internal medicine, OB/GYN, and pediatrics.² State data confirm that many Vermont counties have population-to-primary-care-provider ratios above the state average, reflecting persistent shortages across rural communities.³

Moreover, the 2024 Vermont State Health Assessment identifies language barriers among immigrant and refugee communities as a leading obstacle to accessing health care. Internationally trained physicians, with their linguistic and cultural competencies, can help close these gaps and foster stronger, more resilient communities by improving access, equity, and trust in care.⁴

Yet systemic barriers prevent many internationally trained physicians from being able to practice medicine in the U.S. Legislation that provides an alternative license pathway to internationally trained physicians allow states to benefit from the education, skills, and experience of a larger pool of qualified practitioners.

S 142 offers Vermont an opportunity to create access to those skills by establishing a structured, supervised, employer-driven pathway that strengthens the state's physician workforce while upholding patient safety. By pairing employer judgment with a clear, well-defined evaluation and supervision framework, the bill ensures that qualified internationally trained physicians have a route to contribute their skills and knowledge meaningfully to Vermont communities.

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

² Vermont Legislative Research Service, Addressing the Shortage of Healthcare Workers in Vermont (June 2024), <https://www.uvm.edu/d10-files/documents/2024-06/Addressing-the-Shortage-of-Healthcare-Workers.pdf>

³ "Shifts in the Vermont Public Health Workforce: Impacts Post-Pandemic and Needed Remediations," VtPHA (Apr. 11, 2025), <https://vtpha.org/shifts-in-the-vermont-public-health-workforce-impacts-post-pandemic-and-needed-remediations/>

⁴ 2024 Vermont State Health Assessment Report (Vermont Department of Health), <https://www.healthvermont.gov/sites/default/files/document/2024-vermont-state-health-assessment-report.pdf>



This approach also underscores why thoughtful flexibility—particularly regarding recency of practice—is important for maintaining a strong and sustainable physician talent pipeline.

Because Vermont employers already screen, hire, mentor, and evaluate clinicians, they are well-positioned to assess the readiness of internationally trained physicians for supervised practice. Recent guidance from the Advisory Commission on Additional Licensing Models (ACALM)—an effort led by long-standing national organizations including Intealth, the Federation of State Medical Boards (FSMB), and the Accreditation Council for Graduate Medical Education (ACGME)—offers a complementary resource for states exploring supervised practice pathways.

Although ACALM’s guidance is new, its value lies in the fact that longstanding national organizations—Intealth, FSMB, and ACGME—are actively engaging in and supporting states developing alternative pathways to licensure. ACALM offers practical reference points, such as structured supervision and multiple methods for evaluating clinical readiness, which reflect familiar approaches in U.S. medical training. Vermont can draw on these elements as helpful resources while continuing to center employer judgment and the state’s specific physician workforce needs. Several of the states that have recently enacted similar legislation are already benefitting from these pathways, including Arkansas, which implemented its newly created model in recent months and has already begun processing applications.

WES has analyzed recency-of-practice provisions across all states that have enacted similar legislation and found no established national standard on this requirement. Moreover, there is not yet data indicating which approach is more effective in supporting workforce entry. To ensure that S 142 is workable for Vermont’s employers and supports a strong physician pipeline, we recommend adopting a more comprehensive recency provision—such as permitting one year of practice within a longer look-back period, paired with employer attestation and defined supervision. At a minimum, the bill should include enhanced board discretion to permit alternative recency periods when approved by the hiring entity should be added. This approach reflects real-world physician pathways and gives employers meaningful ability to identify and support candidates who meet their workforce needs, while maintaining strong protections for patient safety

S 142 will help address Vermont’s physician shortage and promote access to quality care for all state residents by making licensing pathways more accessible for eligible internationally trained physicians in the state.

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



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.