



OFFICE OF VINCENT C. GRAY
CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON HEALTH
COUNCIL OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

MEMORANDUM

TO: Chairman Phil Mendelson

FROM: Councilmember Vincent C. Gray

DATE: September 29, 2021

SUBJECT: Request to Place Emergency Measures on the Agenda for October 5, 2021
Legislative Meeting

This memo is to request that the following measures be placed on the agenda for the October 5, 2021 Legislative Meeting:

- Preserve Our Healthcare Workforce Emergency Declaration Resolution of 2021
- Preserve Our Healthcare Workforce Emergency Amendment Act of 2021
- Preserve Our Healthcare Workforce Temporary Amendment Act of 2021

During the public health emergency, the Mayor and the Department of Health waived some licensure requirements which allowed healthcare providers the flexibility to increase their staffing with healthcare professionals licensed outside of the District in order to ensure that District residents had the appropriate healthcare staffing needed. On July 25, 2021, the Mayor did not renew the public health emergency and the licensure waiver is slated to expire in 60 days after the expiration of the public health emergency on September 23, 2021.

Healthcare providers, such as the Medical Society of the District of Columbia, the DC Primary Care Association, the District of Columbia Hospital Association, and the District of Columbia Health Care Association, are finding significant wait times for District licensure application approvals that go beyond the 60 days transitional period. There is a sincere concern that once the licensure waiver period ends, the backlog in applications and delay in getting new licenses approved will create barriers to service, including losing current providers who have been servicing District residents throughout the public emergency.

Having reliable and sufficient healthcare is essential for keeping District residents safe and healthy. A return to prior licensure requirements for local healthcare providers without a longer transition period could create loss of healthcare access for residents while the District is still threatened by not only COVID-19, but variants that have made the virus three times more transmissible and resistant to some of the previous successful methods of treatment for COVID-19. Without emergency action by the Council, the District

will lose many healthcare professionals that it has relied upon to ensure sufficient staffing to provide quality healthcare for residents during the public health emergency.

Copies of the legislation are attached. For any questions or concerns, please contact Malcolm Cameron, Legislative Analyst, at (202) 341-4425 or mcameron@dccouncil.us.