



## Talent Beyond Boundaries' Statement of Support for SB 849

March 1, 2023

Talent Beyond Boundaries is an international nonprofit building a world where displaced people can safely migrate for work, using their skills to rebuild their lives with dignity and purpose. Talent Beyond Boundaries supports [SB 849](#), which would expand pathways to practice for international medical graduates (IMGs) and increase workforce assistance programs to support eligible internationally educated Oregonians seeking to enter the state's workforce.

TBB connects displaced people with global employers. TBB has supported nearly 850 refugees to relocate to Australia, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Over 60,000 refugees have registered their interest in international employment opportunities in our unique database, [the Talent Catalog](#), demonstrating diverse skill sets and interests. Individuals registered in the Talent Catalog include doctors, nurses, dentists, medical equipment engineers, phlebotomists, and care assistants – and hundreds of other occupations outside the healthcare industry.

Through this experience we have identified that a major obstacle for refugees and immigrants accessing gainful employment is licensure. Licensure in medical fields is important to protect patients and ensure high standards of care. But too often, rigidity in licensing means that refugees and immigrants with experience and training are unable to work in their professions.

Talent Beyond Boundaries partnered with the [UK Nursing and Midwifery Council to develop a new policy supporting relicensure of displaced healthcare professionals](#). It requires training, experience, and excellence, while demonstrating an understanding that, due to their unique circumstances, displaced people who are qualified may not have the same documents and records as other applicants.

This is why SB 849 is so important: it offers flexibility while maintaining rigorous standards of professional licensing. SB 849 is important in meeting critical shortages in healthcare staffing nationally and in Oregon, where 14 of 36 are designated Health Professional Shortage Areas.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> "Designated Health Professional Shortage Areas Statistics: First Quarter of Fiscal Year 2023 Designated HPSA Quarterly Summary." Bureau of Health Workforce, Health Resources and Services Administration (HRSA), U.S.



These shortages impact patient care, requiring Oregon to consider supporting immigrants as one strategy to increase staffing, alongside other measures like greater investments in training and education and improving work conditions for healthcare providers. Studies have found consistent evidence that increased immigration leads to improved patient care with little impact on industry wages or the skill mix of direct care for local workers.<sup>2</sup>

SB 849 will advance flexibility for internationally educated healthcare professionals by:

- Requiring guidance on pathways to professional authorization for internationally educated individuals
- Waive requirement for English proficiency examination for some internationally educated individuals
- Prohibiting Oregon Medical Board from imposing time limitation on completion of United States Medical Licensing Examination.
- Allowing limited license to practice medicine to specified individuals for practice under supervision of other licensed physicians.
- Establishing a grant program to support career guidance and support services to internationally educated residents of Oregon.

SB 849 would foster a more inclusive workforce by making licensing pathways accessible to internationally trained immigrants and refugees and ensuring that they receive the career guidance and support services they need to find suitable employment.

TBB strongly supports this measure, which advances a win-win: allowing new Oregonians to resume work in their areas of training, meeting critical needs for Oregonian patients, and meeting labor shortages for Oregonian employers.

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

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Department of Health & Human Services, December 31, 2022. <https://data.hrsa.gov/Default/GenerateHPSAQuarterlyReport>.

<sup>2</sup> National Bureau of Economic Research, *Immigration, The Long-Term Care Workforce and Elder Outcomes in the US*, 2023. [https://www.nber.org/system/files/working\\_papers/w30960/w30960.pdf](https://www.nber.org/system/files/working_papers/w30960/w30960.pdf)