

DRAFT AGENCY LETTER OF SUPPORT

[COMPANY LETTERHEAD]

RE: Letter of support for H.R. 8347, the RURAL Healthcare Act

[COMPANY] is a temporary healthcare staffing company serving rural and underserved communities across America. We help fill staffing gaps in hospitals, clinics, and other healthcare facilities to ensure uninterrupted patient care in Health Professional Shortage Areas (HPSAs). We are headquartered in [PLACE], with offices in PLACES. Our [NUMBER] employees place healthcare providers across the country. Each year, we find and help connect over [NUMBER] physicians and advanced practice providers with healthcare facilities. OPTIONAL: These providers serve an estimated [NUMBER] patients.

“Locum tenens” is a Latin phrase meaning “place holding.” A locum tenens provider is a licensed physician or advanced practice provider who steps in when a staff provider is unavailable because of illness, vacation, family leave, or departure, among other reasons. Without these providers, rural patients would have to travel long distances or be unable to access the care they need.

Physicians and advanced practice providers choose locum tenens work for many reasons, including supplementing their income, gaining greater flexibility and control over their schedules, and during career transitions. Locum tenens providers also support rural hospitals, outpatient centers, government and military facilities, including the VA, Indian Health Service, and community health centers.

Locum tenens physicians have been classified as 1099 independent contractors for more than 40 years. With the emergence of the gig economy, many federal and state legislatures have sought to classify more workers as employees rather than independent contractors. Locum tenens physicians typically do not need or want to be W-2 employees. Most locum tenens providers are already employed elsewhere and work locum tenens assignments on the side. Requiring W-2 employment for this work would reduce provider participation and limit patient access to care in rural and underserved areas.

[Company-specific rural case studies or anecdotes of servicing rural areas]

Immediate federal action is necessary to protect patient access to care. After California adopted its ABC test, lawmakers recognized the impact on healthcare and exempted locum tenens physicians through AB 5. Advanced practice providers, however, were not exempted, causing some clinicians and staffing companies to stop accepting California assignments. Other states have proposed similar workforce legislation, creating confusion and contradictions, justifying a federal exemption. H.R. 8347, the RURAL Healthcare Act, will set a federal precedent by classifying qualified locum tenens physicians and advanced care practitioners as independent contractors under the Fair Labor Standards Act and the National Labor Relations Act.

With strong support from Chairmen Walberg and Mackenzie, we hope the RURAL Healthcare Act will soon pass the full Education and Workforce Committee. COMPANY stands ready to support the passage of H.R. 8347.

Thank you in advance,

NAME

TITLE

COMPANY