



3600 Market St suite 400, Philadelphia, PA 19104
www.cgfns.org



March 26, 2020

Mark A. Morgan
Acting Commissioner
U.S. Customs and Border Patrol
1300 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20229

Dear Commissioner Morgan:

During the current crisis, our critical healthcare workforce needs are becoming apparent. Health professionals, most notably nurses, are the foundation of our healthcare system's efforts to combat the coronavirus crisis. As part of that effort, foreign-educated nurses (FENs) are serving on the frontlines and many more could potentially serve American patients. **I strongly encourage U.S. Customs and Border Patrol to ensure that qualified FENs with visas can enter the United States to address the critical health needs of our patients.**

CGFNS International, Inc. (CGFNS), based in Philadelphia, is the world's largest credentials analysis and skills qualification organization for nurses and allied health professionals. CGFNS was established in 1977 by the American Nurses Association and National League of Nursing to ensure that foreign-educated nurses coming to the U.S. had the knowledge and skills to be licensed in the United States. Since the *Illegal Immigration Reform and Immigrant Responsibility Act of 1996* was passed, Section 343 requires specific healthcare professionals, including registered nurses, to complete a screening program before they can receive an employment-based immigrant visa. CGFNS is the organization designated by federal law to issue *VisaScreen*[®] certificates for nurses and allied health professions, and by many state licensing boards, to ensure only qualified and skilled foreign-educated nurses and other healthcare professionals are able to obtain licensure to practice their profession in the U.S. and immigrate to this country.

As a result of coronavirus concerns, regular border crossings are prohibited in many cases. FENs are critical to the U.S. public health, however, and as such, we ask that CBP ensures that the entrance of any FENs for work purposes be unimpeded and deemed essential. This is the case for FENs coming to the U.S. from around the globe but is of particular import for Canadian nurses who might regularly commute back-and-forth to the U.S. to work in northern U.S. hospitals and other healthcare facilities. In addition, if possessing an immigrant visa, FENs from any country should be processed for admission notwithstanding any current limitations on the travel of persons who do not already possess permanent resident alien documents.



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FOREIGN NURSING SCHOOLS



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Please let us know if you have any questions; we would also welcome the opportunity to further highlight our important work on behalf of the Department of Homeland Security, and how can we collaborate to advance our respective missions in the future.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Franklin".

Franklin A. Shaffer
President and Chief Executive Officer
CGFNS International, Inc.

Phone: 215-243-5810

Email: fshaffer@cgfns.org



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