

Sixty-eighth
Legislative Assembly
of North Dakota

ENGROSSED SENATE BILL NO. 2142

Introduced by

Senators Mathern, K. Roers, Sorvaag

Representatives Ista, Meier, Mitskog

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-60 of the North Dakota
2 Century Code, relating to the creation of an office of immigration; to provide an appropriation;
3 and to provide for a report.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 54-60 of the North Dakota Century Code is created
6 and enacted as follows:

7 **Office of immigration - Duties - Fees.**

8 There is created an office of immigration within the department of commerce. Employees of
9 the office of immigration report to the commissioner and shall:

- 10 1. Coordinate and expedite the immigration process and placement of international
11 workers immigrating to North Dakota for employment.
- 12 2. Support recently immigrated individuals by assisting with any financial, legal, housing,
13 or other immigration-related applications, forms, or communications necessary to
14 provide for successful immigration to the state.
- 15 3. Collaborate with employers to establish a system to assist immigrants with accessing
16 basic housing, food, and other essential services necessary to provide for successful
17 immigration to the state.
- 18 4. Create a communication system among immigrated individuals to provide a network
19 for immigrants to share community resources and provide immigration process
20 assistance.
- 21 5. Provide outreach services to current and potential immigrants to encourage additional
22 individuals to immigrate to North Dakota for employment.
- 23 6. Develop guidelines and procedures for a fee system to be assessed to each business
24 benefiting from employment of immigrant workers as a result of assistance provided

1 by the office of immigration to offset administrative costs of the office of immigration by
2 July 1, 2025. Revenue collected from immigration assistance fees and any interest
3 earned on these moneys must be deposited in the economic development fund for the
4 benefit of the office of immigration, subject to legislative appropriations.

5 **SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION - DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE - OFFICE OF**
6 **IMMIGRATION - FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITIONS - REPORT TO SIXTY-NINTH**

7 **LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY - ONE-TIME FUNDING.** There is appropriated out of any moneys in
8 the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$242,500, or so
9 much of the sum as may be necessary, and out of any moneys in the economic development
10 fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$242,500, or so much of the
11 sum as may be necessary, to the department of commerce for the purpose of providing salaries
12 and benefits for office of immigration staff, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, and ending
13 June 30, 2025. The department of commerce is authorized one full-time equivalent position to
14 administer the office of immigration. The department of commerce shall report to the sixty-ninth
15 legislative assembly regarding the number of immigrants and employers assisted through the
16 office of immigration during the 2023-25 biennium. The \$242,500 appropriation from the general
17 fund in this section is considered a one-time funding item.

18 **SECTION 3. LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT STUDY - IMMIGRATION - BUDGET**

19 **SECTION REPORT - REPORT TO SIXTY-NINTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.** During the
20 2023-24 interim, the legislative management shall study the immigration needs in the state. The
21 study must include input from the department of commerce regarding the implementation of the
22 office of immigration, the number of immigrants assisted, efficiencies gained in helping
23 immigrant individuals with the immigration process, collaborative efforts with businesses, the
24 status of the immigration communication system, the status of developing a fee system to
25 defray the administrative costs of the office, and other immigration needs in the state. The study
26 must be completed by July 1, 2024. The interim committee assigned the responsibility for this
27 study shall provide a recommendation regarding the current and future immigration needs of the
28 state and the role of the office of immigration to the budget section. The legislative management
29 shall report its findings and recommendations, together with any legislation required to
30 implement the recommendations, to the sixty-ninth legislative assembly.