

**FIRST ENGROSSMENT  
with House Amendments  
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 legal immigration; to provide an  
3 appropriation; 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 legal immigration - Duties.**

8 There is created an office of legal immigration within the department of commerce.

9 Employees of the office of legal immigration report to the commissioner. The office of legal  
10 immigration:

- 11 1. Shall develop and implement a statewide strategy to support businesses in recruiting  
12 and retaining foreign labor, including immigrants already in the United States and  
13 integration of immigrants into the state to promote economic opportunities for  
14 immigrant communities.
- 15 2. Shall advise and make recommendations to the governor, legislative assembly, and  
16 state agencies regarding immigrant integration and foreign labor issues.
- 17 3. Shall develop a pilot program to support businesses pursuing or employing legal  
18 immigrants and to support communities to develop immigration integration plans and  
19 activities.
- 20 4. May contract with other state agencies to develop and administer programs or  
21 services related to immigration integration and access to basic needs that promote  
22 entrance and movement throughout the workforce.
- 23 5. May contract with an organization with expertise related to the goals of the office of  
24 legal immigration.

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

3       **LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.** There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the  
4 state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$485,000, or so much of the sum as may  
5 be necessary, to the department of commerce for the purpose of providing salaries and benefits  
6 for office of legal immigration staff, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, and ending  
7 June 30, 2025. The department of commerce is authorized two full-time equivalent positions to  
8 administer the office of legal immigration. The department of commerce shall report to the  
9 sixty-ninth legislative assembly regarding the number of immigrants and employers assisted  
10 through the office of legal immigration during the 2023-25 biennium.

11       **SECTION 3. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE STUDY - IMMIGRATION - REPORT TO**  
12       **SIXTY-NINTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.** During the 2023-24 interim, the department of  
13 commerce shall conduct a study to determine immigration opportunities in the state, goals of  
14 the office of legal immigration, performance indicators to measure progress and success of  
15 immigration goals, and a structure for a pilot program to support businesses and communities  
16 pursuing legal immigration, and to develop a fee-based system for services to be implemented  
17 in the 2025-27 biennium. The study must include input from employers in the state. The  
18 department of commerce shall report its findings and recommendations to the sixty-ninth  
19 legislative assembly.