

**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 health care immigration; to provide ~~an~~  
3 contingent appropriation; to provide for a legislative management study; and to provide for a  
4 report.

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

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

8 **Office of health care immigration - Duties - Fees.**

9 There is created an office of health care immigration within the department of commerce.

10 Employees of the office of health care immigration report to the commissioner and shall:

- 11 1. Coordinate and expedite the immigration process and placement of international  
12 health care workers immigrating to North Dakota for employment in health care  
13 facilities.
- 14 2. Support recently immigrated individuals working in a health care facility by assisting  
15 with any financial, legal, housing, or other immigration-related applications, forms, or  
16 communications necessary to provide for successful immigration to the state.
- 17 3. Collaborate with health care facilities to establish a system to assist immigrants with  
18 accessing basic housing, food, and other essential services necessary to provide for  
19 successful immigration to the state.
- 20 4. Create a communication system among health care immigrated and other immigrated  
21 individuals to provide a network for immigrants to share community resources and  
22 provide immigration process assistance.

1       5. Provide outreach services to current and potential health care immigrants to  
2       encourage additional individuals to immigrate to North Dakota for employment in  
3       health care facilities.

4       6. Develop guidelines and procedures for a fee system to be assessed to each business  
5       benefiting from employment of immigrant workers as a result of assistance provided  
6       by the office of health care immigration to offset administrative costs of the office of  
7       health care immigration by July 1, 2025. Revenue collected from health care  
8       immigration assistance fees and any interest earned on these moneys must be  
9       deposited in the economic development fund for the benefit of the office of health care  
10       immigration, subject to legislative appropriations.

11       **SECTION 2. CONTINGENT APPROPRIATION - DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE -**  
12       **OFFICE OF HEALTH CARE IMMIGRATION - FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITIONS -**  
13       **BUDGET SECTION APPROVAL - REPORT TO SIXTY-NINTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY -**

14       **ONE-TIME FUNDING.** There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state  
15       treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$536,257, or so much of the sum as may be  
16       necessary, and out of any moneys in the economic development fund in the state treasury, not  
17       otherwise appropriated, the sum of \$536,257, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to  
18       the department of commerce for the purpose of providing salaries and benefits for office of  
19       health care immigration staff, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30,  
20       2025. The department of commerce is authorized five full-time equivalent positions to  
21       administer the office of health care immigration, ~~including one attorney, one administrative-~~  
22       ~~assistant, and three nurse positions.~~ The funding appropriated in this section may be spent only  
23       to the extent approval is received from the budget section. When evaluating the potential  
24       approval to spend funds appropriated in this section, the budget section shall consider the  
25       requirements of subsection 5 of section 54-35-02.9, the recommendation provided pursuant to  
26       section 3 of this Act, the current and future immigration needs in the state, and the potential  
27       effect the services of the office of health care immigration will have on these needs. The  
28       department of commerce shall report to the sixty-ninth legislative assembly regarding the  
29       number of health care immigrants and health care facilities assisted through the office of health  
30       care immigration during the 2023-25 biennium. The \$536,257 appropriation from the general  
31       fund in this section is considered a one-time funding item.

**SECTION 3. LEGISLATIVE MANAGEMENT STUDY - HEALTH CARE IMMIGRATION -  
BUDGET SECTION REPORT - REPORT TO SIXTY-NINTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY.**

During the 2023-24 interim, the legislative management shall consider studying health care immigration needs in the state. The study must include input from the department of commerce regarding the implementation of the office of health care immigration, the number of health care immigrants assisted, efficiencies gained in helping immigrant individuals with the immigration process, collaborative efforts with health care facilities and other health care organizations, the status of the immigration communication system, the status of developing a fee system to defray the administrative costs of the office, and other health care immigration needs in the state. The study must be completed by July 1, 2024. The interim committee assigned the responsibility for this study shall provide a recommendation regarding the current and future immigration needs in the state and the role of the office of health care immigration to the budget section. The legislative management shall report its findings and recommendations, together with any legislation required to implement the recommendations, to the sixty-ninth legislative assembly.