

Do Pass Testimony

Citizen of ND

On SB 2151

In the 68th Legislative Assembly of ND

Dear Workforce Development Committee,

I am a citizen of ND and am writing in support of SB 2151 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new chapter to title 6 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the creation of an office of immigration and the immigration workforce loan program; to provide a transfer; to provide an appropriation; and to provide for a report.

North Dakota is facing a worker shortage crisis. Baby boomers are retiring and there are not enough younger native North Dakotans to fill the void. Several well established restaurants closed recently in Bismarck area citing lack of help. I work in healthcare, and one of my friends had to work 10-12 hour days for 20 days without a day off because her department is that short on help. My part of the state has no reliable home care in rural areas. Nursing homes have not been fully staffed since before COVID. There are huge shortages of not just nursing related positions, but also maintainance, dietary and laundry, entry level positions that would require no professional degree and would be perfect for people who just arrived. North Dakota can either continue to ignore the problem and face its elderly population being left without caregivers, or be proactive in creating a welcoming and supportive environment to immigrant workforce, to the benefit of both sides.

I am also an immigrant and have lived and worked in this state for 28 years, 14 of them as a citizen. US immigration system is not easy to navigate under ideal curcumstances, even knowing the language and having access to transportation it was difficult, confusing and expensive for me to go through the process. I know many people who would have liked to stay and work in this state, that eventually gave up and moved to areas that did have immigration support networks. This state was created by immigrants who traveled here because of the promise of free land. It seems like just a few generations later their decendents forgot they used to be in the same boat. I urge you to pass this bill, so this state's economy can continue to grow and diversify, so the elderly that have worked so hard in this state can continue to have care that they deserve. This is exactly what Legacy Funds should be used for. Please vote DO PASS.

Sincerely,

Alexandra Tsibur-Mayer

District 36