



The Honorable Jonathan Warrey, Chair
House Industry, Business, and Labor Committee
North Dakota House of Representatives
State Capitol, Room 327C
600 East Boulevard Ave.
Bismarck, ND 58505

Dear Chairman Warrey and other distinguished members of the Committee:

My name is Shari Rendall and I am the Director of State and Local Engagement. I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony on behalf of the Federation for American Immigration Reform (FAIR). FAIR is a non-profit, non-partisan organization of concerned individuals who believe that our immigration laws must be reformed to serve our nation's interests.

FAIR advocates for immigration policies that reduce the harmful impact of illegal immigration on national security, public safety, the economy, jobs, education, healthcare, and the environment.

Founded in 1979, FAIR has three million members and supporters nationwide including approximately 1,330 in North Dakota. On behalf of our members and supporters, I am writing to express FAIR's strong support for House Bill (HB) 1291 which would require employers to ensure a legal workforce.

Americans lose out on millions of job opportunities every year because companies seeking cheap labor choose to fill positions with illegal aliens. Since most illegal aliens come to the United States from impoverished countries with failing economies, the vast majority are willing to work for any remuneration they consider reasonable, even though the wage offered may be significantly below the market rate or even below legal minimum wage. Unscrupulous employers regularly exploit illegal alien laborers to cut their costs and increase their profits.

Moreover, Pew Research found in 2022 approximately 8.3 million illegal aliens participated in the US labor force and according to FAIR's 2023 Cost Study at least 25 percent of those operate in the "underground economy" – that is, they work "under the

table.” These individuals are not authorized to work in the United States and their employers do not comply with applicable immigration, safety, wage and hour, and tax laws. In most cases, the employer and the illegal alien willfully collaborate to violate the law. In others, employers rely on weak employment verification requirements and voluntarily turn a blind eye to questionable identity and immigration documents.

With 7.4 percent of the U.S. workforce currently unemployed or underemployed as of November 2022, those who are lawfully permitted to work in this country deserve every opportunity to find jobs without competing against illegal aliens willing to work for sub-standard wages. Requiring employers to verify their workforce is therefore smart public policy because it not only protects employers from violating the law – it protects American workers from unfair job competition and wage depression.

For the aforementioned reasons, FAIR urges you to favorably pass HB 1291.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Shari Rendall". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Shari Rendall
Director of State and Local Engagement