

## **Members of the House Industry, Business and Labor Public Hearing,**

My name is Megan Fuller, and I am a near life-long resident of North Dakota. As a citizen of many years, I am writing to you to OPPOSE HB 1493.

America has long been a melting pot of all creeds, colors, and peoples. We have a long history of immigration-in fact, almost all of us would not be here if our ancestors had not immigrated to the US many moons ago. The US was built on immigrant labor-we have a long and storied history of it. Immigrants add value not only to our nation, but to our state. That is why I am writing to you, to recommend you do NOT PASS HB 1493.

North Dakota has long had issues with retaining and attracting people to work here-both nationally and internationally. Why are we trying to exclude immigrants from our great state? There is an overwhelming work-force shortage. According to the Job Service of ND, there are over 15,000 open positions currently. They estimate the reality of that is actually much higher. Why are we trying to shutter an agency that is working to bring families here, that WANT to work jobs we so desperately need filled?

Not only does the Office of Legal Immigration help to attract workers, immigrants also have a positive impact on our economy. According to the American Immigration Council, immigrants make up 4% of North Dakota's population-and have a buying power of 942.6 million dollars. That same group paid 275 million in taxes. Why are we trying to turn good folks, coming here to work, and spend, away? Why are we trying to shutter an agency that is working to attract and retain people who would love to be here, and are grateful for the opportunity?

I am firmly opposed to shuttering this agency. I ask that you DO NOT PASS HB 1493.

Thank you,

Megan Fuller

Jamestown, ND