



THE CHAMBER
FARGO MOORHEAD WEST FARGO

Letter of Opposition – HB 1493

Tuesday, February 11th, 2025

Chairman Warrey and Members of the House Industry, Business, and Labor Committee,

For the record, my name is Cale Dunwoody, and I have the distinct pleasure of serving as the Vice President of Public Policy for the Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce (FMWF Chamber). On behalf of our over 1,700 members, I respectfully offer testimony in opposition of House Bill 1493.

At the FMWF Chamber, our mission is to protect and promote business, inspire individuals, cultivate communities, and influence action. Across the nation, employers are struggling to attract and retain employees. As of November 2024, North Dakota's Labor Force Participation rate trends well above the national average at 68.9% and our state unemployment rate is among the lowest in the nation at 2.4%. Our low unemployment rate, coupled with high labor force participation rates, suggest that most individuals who are able and willing to work are already employed, amplifying the challenge for employers seeking to fill the 14,000+ openings statewide. Our state must strive to compete on a global scale for the workforce to fill our thousands of open jobs. To do this, both the public and private sectors must work together to identify creative, innovative, and multi-pronged solutions. We believe legal immigration is pivotal to addressing this crisis and serves as a critical component of a comprehensive workforce solution.

Many business and industry leaders throughout our region have shared their desire to look beyond our nation's borders to fill open jobs but are often faced with several challenges. For example, many businesses do not have immigration experts on staff, nor do they have access to the necessary information, resources, and legal services in their communities to assist in the hiring of immigrants. The Office of Legal Immigration provides businesses with the support they require to attract, retain, and develop talent from across the globe. Because of the vital services provided by this agency - we stand in firm opposition to its disbandment.

The workforce crisis our country is facing is complex and cannot be solved unilaterally. The Office of Legal Immigration establishes a strategic and creative solution to the challenges facing our businesses and communities.

We respectfully urge the committee to give this bill a DO NOT PASS.

Sincerely,



THE CHAMBER
FARGO MOORHEAD WEST FARGO

Cale Dunwoody
Vice President of Public Policy
Fargo Moorhead West Fargo Chamber of Commerce