



Testimony of Brekka Kramer
Economic Development Association of North Dakota
In Opposition of HB 1493
February 11, 2025

Chairman Warrey and members of the House Industry, Business and Labor Committee:

My name is Brekka Kramer, I am the President and CEO of the Minot Area Chamber EDC and a board member of the Economic Development Association of North Dakota (EDND), which represents economic development professionals across the state. EDND works to strengthen communities, grow our economy, and improve North Dakota's overall quality of life. We stand in opposition to HB 1493 which would repeal the Office of Legal Immigration, a critical resource for businesses and communities working to address workforce shortages.

Workforce availability is one of the biggest challenges facing North Dakota. Businesses in industries such as healthcare, manufacturing, technology, and agriculture struggle to fill open positions. Legal immigration is one tool that helps meet these workforce needs, and the Office of Legal Immigration was created to provide employers with guidance in navigating the hiring process, while also helping communities integrate new workers.

EDND has long worked alongside the North Dakota Department of Commerce to develop solutions that support business growth and workforce development. The Office of Legal Immigration is a key part of these efforts, serving as a hub to coordinate state resources and support businesses that rely on skilled workers from around the world. Eliminating this office would make it harder for North Dakota employers—especially in rural areas—to compete for talent and remain viable.

North Dakota must continue to be proactive in addressing workforce shortages. Other states are actively working to attract and retain legal immigrants to strengthen their economies, and repealing this office would put North Dakota at a disadvantage. Now is the time to expand workforce solutions, not eliminate them.

EDND urges the committee to give this bill a “Do Not Pass” recommendation and preserve the Office of Legal Immigration as a key resource for North Dakota’s economic future. Thank you for your time and consideration.