

February 10, 2025

House Industry, Business and Labor Committee

Re: HB 1493- Relating to the Office of Legal Immigration

Dear Committee Members,

My name is Stacy Kusler and I am the workforce specialist for the UND Center for Rural Health. I respectfully submit the following testimony for HB1493, regarding the Office of Legal Immigration (OLI).

I have worked with staff members of OLI over the past 18 months. OLI has been a welcomed addition to the efforts surrounding workforce recruitment and retention by offering resources and tools to connect with eligible candidates from outside of the US.

Many rural hospitals and healthcare facilities in the state employ individuals from outside of the US to fill vital positions. Navigating the immigration process can be confusing and intimidating, especially if the candidate has family members coming along, as well. The addition of the OLI since last biennium has offered a starting point for employers to begin the process of filling vacancies that contribute to patient care.

The Global Talent Summit, hosted by OLI in August in Bismarck, was a positive experience which provided attendees with new motivation and strategies for attracting and keeping workforce (and their families) here in the state. OLI has also hosted online webinars on immigration topics specific to healthcare, which were well attended.

Thank you,

Stacy Kusler, B.A, FASPR

Workforce Specialist

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