



**2025 HB 1493**

**House Industry, Business and Labor Committee**

**Representative Jonathan Warrey, Chairman**

**February 11, 2025**

Chairman Warrey and members of the House Industry, Business and Labor Committee, I am Aaron Brennan from the North Dakota Hospital Association. I am here to testify in opposition to House Bill 1493. I ask that you give this bill a **Do Not Pass** recommendation.

North Dakota is facing a serious workforce shortage, especially in healthcare. According to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, as of late 2024, our state had about 26,000 job openings but only 7,890 unemployed workers, meaning there are just 30 available workers for every 100 open jobs ([uschamber.com](https://www.uschamber.com)). This gap is hitting healthcare the hardest, with hospitals and clinics struggling to fill essential roles, particularly in rural areas.

To address this challenge, NDHA, through its subsidiary HSIolutions, is taking an innovative approach to tackle this shortage. Healthcare Talent Connect (HTC) is a technology platform focused on improving the way we recruit and retain healthcare professionals. HTC is built on two key components: a statewide resource pool and an international talent network.

- The statewide resource pool.
- The international talent network focuses on recruiting highly skilled foreign-trained workers who want to live and work in North Dakota, particularly in rural communities where the need is greatest.

The Office of Legal Immigration plays a critical role in helping HTC get off the ground and succeed. Recruiting foreign-trained healthcare workers isn't as simple as filling a job opening—it requires navigating complex visa processes, licensing requirements, and workforce integration efforts. The OLI's expertise in these areas is essential to making sure healthcare organizations can efficiently bring in international talent while also ensuring that North Dakota communities are prepared to support and retain these workers long-term. A recent example that comes to mind was their webinar on the E3 visa.

Without the OLI, healthcare organizations would be left to figure out these complicated processes on their own, creating more barriers, delays, and higher recruitment costs. Keeping the OLI in place ensures that HTC can move forward with the structure, resources, and expertise needed to make this initiative successful—helping North Dakota healthcare organizations recruit smarter, reduce costs, and provide better care to the patients who depend on them.

For these reasons, I urge you to oppose HB1493 and support the continued work of the Office of Legal Immigration. Thank you for the opportunity to testify. I would be glad to answer any questions.

Respectfully Submitted,

Aaron Brennan  
North Dakota Hospital Association