

Introduced by

1 A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-60 of the North Dakota
2 Century Code, relating to the commissioner of commerce's duty to establish a toll-free business
3 hotline; to provide for a report to the legislative council; and to provide an expiration date.

4 **BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:**

5 **SECTION 1.** A new section to chapter 54-60 of the North Dakota Century Code is
6 created and enacted as follows:

7 **Business hotline.** The commissioner shall create and implement a business hotline
8 program. The program must provide for a toll-free telephone number through which the
9 department shall provide, during regular business hours, in-state and out-of-state callers with
10 information regarding how to do business in the state, the services and assistance available to
11 businesses, the advantages of doing business in the state, and information on state and other
12 resources that provide assistance to businesses in the state. In addition to directly providing
13 information, the department may use the toll-free number as a clearinghouse through which to
14 refer callers to other federal, state, local, or private sector economic developers. The program
15 must include an in-state and out-of-state marketing campaign in support of the program. The
16 commissioner shall follow up on business leads gained through the program and shall gather
17 data on the results of calls, including business expansion, location, and startup.

18 **SECTION 2. REPORT TO LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.** During the 2005-06 interim, the
19 commissioner of commerce shall report to the legislative council on the status of the business
20 hotline program. This report must include information regarding what information the program
21 provides to callers; the number of calls made to the toll-free number; the manner in which the
22 information is provided to callers; followup data; how the program is marketed; whether the
23 program should continue; and whether there are potential changes that could be made to
24 improve the dissemination of business information to businesses in the state, to persons

1 planning on starting a business in the state, and to businesses wishing to do business in the
2 state.

3 **SECTION 3. EXPIRATION DATE.** This Act is effective through July 31, 2007, and
4 after that date is ineffective.