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Testimony of Matthew Marshall in Support of SB 2018  
March 17, 2025

Chairman Nathe and members of the House Appropriations - Education and Environment Division,

As an economic development professional in Northeastern North Dakota, I have a firsthand look at the strain the lack of workforce is placing on many businesses and communities. Current businesses are struggling to recruit new employees and fill vacancies of those retiring. This trend continuing is also resulting in large areas of the state experiencing population loss which increases costs for everyone calling North Dakota home.

I would like to emphasize the critical importance of sustaining North Dakota's workforce recruitment efforts through the "Find the Good Life" campaign. This national talent attraction initiative has made significant strides in addressing our state's workforce challenges. The division has reported on the campaign achievements and now coupled with many local efforts; we're building momentum.

The "Find the Good Life" campaign has established a robust infrastructure, including a comprehensive website that showcases North Dakota's vibrant communities, educational opportunities, and career prospects. This platform serves as a vital tool in attracting talent and facilitating their transition to our state.

Discontinuing the campaign at this juncture would risk forfeiting the momentum we've painstakingly built. The initial successes are promising, but the full potential of these efforts will be realized only with sustained investment and support. The proposal to rename the Office of Legal Immigration to the Office of Global Talent also reflects a strategic shift towards attracting a diverse and skilled workforce. This legislative change aligns seamlessly with the objectives of the "Find the Good Life" campaign, reinforcing our commitment to fostering a dynamic workforce.

The "Find the Good Life" campaign represents a pivotal investment in North Dakota's future, addressing workforce shortages and enriching our communities. Abandoning this initiative now would not only squander the resources already invested but also hinder our progress toward a thriving, diverse, and robust workforce. I urge you to consider the long-term benefits of this campaign and support its continued funding and development.

Thank you for your attention and commitment to the prosperity of North Dakota.  
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Matt Marshall".

Matt Marshall,  
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