



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.