



February 14, 2025

To: Chair Wobbema and Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce Development

From: Victoria Francis, Deputy Director, State & Local Initiatives, American Immigration Council

RE: SB 2270: An act to create and enact chapter 43-17.6 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the licensure of international physicians.

Dear Chair Wobbema and Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce Development,

My name is Victoria Francis, and I am the Deputy Director of State and Local Initiatives at the American Immigration Council (the Council), an organization that works to advance positive public attitudes toward immigrants and create a more welcoming America—one that provides a fair process for immigrants and adopts immigration laws and policies that take into account the needs of the U.S. economy.

I am submitting this letter to express the Council's support for removing barriers that keep qualified North Dakotans from contributing to the state's workforce. To this end, I respectfully encourage the passage of SB 2270, which would establish a process for international physicians to obtain provisional and, eventually, full medical licensure in North Dakota, contingent on meeting specific educational, professional, and legal criteria.

My organization has worked with leaders in government, business, and civil society across the country to recognize the crucial role immigrants are playing in state and local economies in some of the fastest-growing and most in-demand fields, including healthcare. In order to remain competitive and meet critical healthcare workforce shortages, North Dakota will need to continue to implement policies that not only attract and retain immigrant talent that complements U.S.-born workers but also build career pathways for immigrants already living in the state. SB 2270 will do just that by expanding access to licenses to qualified internationally trained residents, thereby increasing economic opportunities for all residents and helping to meet the state's pressing workforce and healthcare needs.

To help illustrate why this measure is so important and why it makes sense to reduce barriers for all qualified North Dakotans, my organization has conducted quantitative research on the impact immigrants already have on the state and the growing demand for workers in North Dakota.¹ What we found is striking.

¹ Available at <https://map.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/locations/north-dakota/>.



- **As of 2022, North Dakota is home to 31,500 immigrants, making up 4.0 percent of the state's population.** These residents are critical to addressing the state's workforce shortages across the skills and education spectrum, with 89.0 percent of immigrant North Dakotans being of working age (ages 16-64), compared to 61.6 percent of their U.S.-born counterparts.
- **Immigrants in North Dakota are contributing millions in taxes and consumer spending.** In 2022, immigrant households in the state earned \$1.2 billion in income, with \$190.3 million going to federal taxes and \$84.6 million going to state and local taxes, leaving them with \$942.6 million in spending power that can be reinvested back in the state.
- **North Dakota's immigrant population is already filling a critical need for workers.** In 2022, despite making up 4.0 percent of the state's total population, immigrants made up 5.6 percent of workers in the labor force.

As more North Dakotans reach retirement age and the state must address workforce shortages, retaining and leveraging the talent of all residents is critical. North Dakota is in a position to take decisive action to support and leverage the skills of the state's future workforce and advance opportunities that benefit all North Dakotans. I encourage the Senate Committee on Workforce Development to support the passage of SB 2270.

Thank you for your consideration,

Victoria Francis

Deputy Director, State & Local Initiatives
American Immigration Council