A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new section to chapter 54-60 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the creation of an office of health care immigration; to provide an appropriation; and to provide for a report.

BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY OF NORTH DAKOTA:

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

Office of health care immigration - Duties - Fees.

There is created an office of health care immigration within the department of commerce. Employees of the office of health care immigration report to the commissioner and shall:

1. Coordinate and expedite the immigration process and placement of international health care workers immigrating to North Dakota for employment in health care facilities.

2. Support recently immigrated individuals working in a health care facility by assisting with any financial, legal, housing, or other immigration-related applications, forms, or communications necessary to provide for successful immigration to the state.

3. Collaborate with health care facilities to establish a system to assist immigrants with accessing basic housing, food, and other essential services necessary to provide for successful immigration to the state.

4. Create a communication system among health care immigrated and other immigrated individuals to provide a network for immigrants to share community resources and provide immigration process assistance.

5. Provide outreach services to current and potential health care immigrants to encourage additional individuals to immigrate to North Dakota for employment in health care facilities.
6. Develop guidelines and procedures for a fee system to be assessed to each business benefiting from employment of immigrant workers as a result of assistance provided by the office of health care immigration to offset administrative costs of the office of health care immigration by July 1, 2025. Revenue collected from health care immigration assistance fees and any interest earned on these moneys must be deposited in the economic development fund for the benefit of the office of health care immigration, subject to legislative appropriations.

SECTION 2. APPROPRIATION - DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE - OFFICE OF HEALTH CARE IMMIGRATION - FULL-TIME EQUIVALENT POSITIONS - REPORT TO SIXTY-NINTH LEGISLATIVE ASSEMBLY - ONE-TIME FUNDING. There is appropriated out of any moneys in the general fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of $536,257, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, and out of any moneys in the economic development fund in the state treasury, not otherwise appropriated, the sum of $536,257, or so much of the sum as may be necessary, to the department of commerce for the purpose of providing salaries and benefits for office of health care immigration staff, for the biennium beginning July 1, 2023, and ending June 30, 2025. The department of commerce is authorized five full-time equivalent positions to administer the office of health care immigration, including one attorney, one administrative assistant, and three nurse positions. The department of commerce shall report to the sixty-ninth legislative assembly regarding the number of health care immigrants and health care facilities assisted through the office of health care immigration during the 2023-25 biennium. The $536,257 appropriation from the general fund in this section is considered a one-time funding item.