

October 2008

Introduced by

1 A concurrent resolution expressing support for the development of a balanced national
2 immigration policy and urging Congress to work to develop an immigration policy that protects
3 and preserves the safety and interests of the United States and its citizens while also
4 recognizing the needs of businesses to have a stable and legal supply of workers.

5 **WHEREAS**, North Dakota's economy is growing and as a result there are approximately
6 15,000 unfilled jobs in the state; and

7 **WHEREAS**, three population trends affecting the state--rural depopulation, outmigration
8 of young adults and young families, and an increasing proportion of the elderly--are contributing
9 toward a difficulty in businesses meeting workforce needs; and

10 **WHEREAS**, the United States generally, and North Dakota specifically, will be facing
11 demographic challenges related to decreasing numbers of high school graduates; and

12 **WHEREAS**, continued economic growth in this state and this country is dependent on
13 businesses being able to access and rely on a stable and legal workforce; and

14 **WHEREAS**, current immigration law does not address United States labor shortages or
15 marketplace dynamics; and

16 **WHEREAS**, in addition to working to eliminate current visa backlogs, there are steps
17 that could be taken at the federal level to help address workforce-related immigration issues,
18 including:

- 19 · Increasing annual immigrant visa caps;
- 20 · Streamlining the processing of visas; and
- 21 · Expediting work authorization for foreign nationals who are awarded
22 university-level degrees from United States institutions in order to ensure the
23 benefits of the educational investment the country has made in these individuals
24 remain in our country; and

1 **WHEREAS**, workforce-related immigration challenges are being experienced
2 nationwide;

3 **NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF NORTH DAKOTA, THE**
4 **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:**

5 That the Sixty-first Legislative Assembly expresses support for the development of a
6 balanced national immigration policy and urges the Congress of the United States to work to
7 develop an immigration policy that protects and preserves the safety and interests of the United
8 States and its citizens while also recognizing the needs of businesses to have a stable and
9 legal supply of workers; and

10 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED**, that the Secretary of State forward copies of this
11 resolution to the Majority Leader of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States
12 House of Representatives, the United States Department of Homeland Security, and to each
13 member of the North Dakota Congressional Delegation.