



Thursday, March 10, 2022

The Honorable Representative Mohamud Noor
Chair, Workforce and Business Development Finance and Policy
379 State Office Building
St. Paul, MN 55155

Chairman Noor;

The Center for Economic Inclusion is pleased to offer this letter in support of the Department of Employment and Economic Development's efforts to support Minnesota's new workers. As a nonprofit dedicated to building an inclusive Minnesota economy, we think creating an Office of New Americans, an Office for Ombudsperson for Safety, Health, and Wellbeing of Agricultural and Food Processing and funding the Extension of the Agricultural Worker Wellness Committee move us towards this goal.

Minnesota has a strong history of global talent attraction. One out of 12 Minnesotans were born abroad, and nine percent of Minnesota's population are immigrants from a diverse array of countries including (*but not limited to*) Mexico, Somalia, India, and Laos. Immigrants have and continue to strengthen Minnesota's culture, economy, government and community fabric. However, we know immigrant communities face language barriers, unfair labor practices, difficulties navigating Minnesota's workforce resources, and occupational health challenges in certain sectors. From a workforce perspective, these represent significant problems in employee health, wages, and retention that impact the families of workers.

The Center is committed to advocating for immigrant employee health, wage equity, and retention. This is an economic and moral imperative for Minnesota workers and employers. The proposed policies are a proactive step forward and we must continue to actively pursue policies for new workers that will propel Minnesota forward as the first state in the nation to achieve an inclusive and equitable economy. To that end, the Center for Economic Inclusion supports this plan.

In Solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tawanna A. Black".

Tawanna A. Black