



## News Release

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### Immigrants Have Positive Economic Impact

Fargo, N.D. (February 1, 2017) – State and national studies show immigrants have a positive economic impact both locally and nationally. Between 2011-2013, immigrants in North Dakota paid \$133.9 million in taxes and spent \$425.7 million, according to a study conducted by The New American Economy.

Locally, immigrants and refugees help Fargo by addressing workforce needs. *The Regional Workforce Study* (2005) reported there were approximately 6,500 unfilled jobs in Fargo-Moorhead. That number is projected to increase to 30,000 by 2020. The study conducted by TIP Strategies and commissioned by the local Chamber of Commerce, the Greater Fargo-Moorhead Economic Development Corporation, the United Way of Cass-Clay and the FM Foundation. Factors contributing to this workforce gap include: the number of people retiring, retention of young adults, and estimated population growth.

“This inability to fill jobs has been a major contributor to the slowdown in our local economy; and the refugee resettlement program has an important part to play in addressing this workforce shortage.” said James Gartin, president of the Greater Fargo-Moorhead Economic Development Corp. “Cutting back on the refugee resettlement program will not benefit the Fargo-Moorhead economy. It will do the opposite.”

“Immigrants and refugees contribute to our community in a number of ways,” states Barry Nelson, North Dakota Human Rights Coalition member. “They enrich our lives with their diversity, their vibrant cultures, their wonderful food, and their positive impact on our local, state, and national economies. They want the same things that all people want -- safety, stability, and the ability to give their children good lives and educations. It would be terribly short-sighted from both a cultural and economic perspective to limit the contributions they make to Fargo.”

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## **Continued: Immigrants Have Positive Economic Impact**

The Fargo Human Relations Commission is researching the costs and benefits of the refugee resettlement program in Fargo. As part of their mission, they will release findings to the public on a regular basis throughout February, culminating with a presentation to the Fargo City Commission, Monday, February 27<sup>th</sup> at 5pm, open to the public.

The Fargo Human Relations Commission promotes acceptance and respect for diversity and discourages all forms of discrimination. The Human Relations Commission meets on the third Thursday of every month at noon in the city commission room, Fargo City Hall, 200 3<sup>rd</sup> St. N. A public comment period is provided at the meetings. For more information, please visit the Human Relations Commission's page on the City of Fargo's website: [cityoffargo.com/humanrelations](http://cityoffargo.com/humanrelations).

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