



## World Education Services Statement of Support for SF 360

World Education Services (WES) supports SF 360, which promotes the economic inclusion of the more than 476,500 immigrants and refugees who live in Minnesota<sup>1</sup> by establishing an Office of New Americans (ONA) within the Department of Employment and Economic Development.

WES is a non-profit social enterprise dedicated to helping international students, immigrants, and refugees achieve their educational and career goals in the United States and Canada. For more than 45 years, WES has set the standard of excellence in the field of international academic credential evaluation. Through WES Global Talent Bridge, the organization joins with institutional partners, community-based organizations, and policymakers to help immigrants and refugees who hold international credentials fully utilize their talents and education to achieve their academic and professional goals. Through its grantmaking, impact investing, and partnerships, the WES Mariam Assefa Fund seeks to advance economic and social inclusion for immigrants and refugees.

WES, together with American Immigration Council, convenes the Office of New Americans (ONA) State Network, a network of 17 states with dedicated staff or offices focused on immigrant and refugee inclusion.

Nearly 10 percent of Minnesota residents—and 11 percent of the state’s workers—are immigrants and refugees.<sup>2</sup> According to data by the Migration Policy Institute, 108,000 immigrants and refugees in Minnesota have a bachelor’s degree or higher, yet 18.6 percent of these individuals are either underemployed or unemployed.<sup>3</sup>

A state office tasked with identifying strategies to advance the economic inclusion of immigrants and refugees is essential to addressing labor shortages and ensuring a more inclusive workforce. SF 360 would address barriers to inclusion and promote equitable opportunities for immigrants and refugees, including increased access to workforce programs and services.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this statement of support.

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<sup>1</sup> “Map the Impact of Immigration: U.S. Economic Data & Numbers,” New American Economy, accessed March 23, 2022. <https://data.newamericaneconomy.org/map-the-impact/>.

<sup>2</sup> “Immigrants in Minnesota,” American Immigration Council, August 6, 2020. <https://www.americanimmigrationcouncil.org/research/immigrants-in-minnesota>.

<sup>3</sup> “State Workforce Data - US.” migrationpolicy.org. Migration Policy Institute, November 1, 2021. <https://www.migrationpolicy.org/data/state-profiles/state/workforce/US/MN/>.