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Bill 98

An Act to establish a framework for the recognition of internationally trained and educated workers in Ontario

Co-sponsors:

Ms D. Begum
Mr. J. Harden
Mr. T. Kernaghan
Mr. T. Rakocevic

Private Members' Bill

1st Reading March 9, 2022

2nd Reading

3rd Reading

Royal Assent



EXPLANATORY NOTE

The Bill enacts the *Fairness for Ontario's Internationally Trained Workers Act, 2022*. The Act provides that the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development shall establish a Foreign Credential Recognition Advisory Committee that shall make recommendations to the Minister regarding the employment of internationally trained workers. The Act also provides that the Minister of Health shall establish an Internationally Trained and Educated Healthcare Professions Advisory Committee that shall make recommendations to the Minister regarding the employment of internationally trained and educated healthcare professionals.

An Act to establish a framework for the recognition of internationally trained and educated workers in Ontario

Preamble

Internationally trained and educated professionals face barriers and challenges in the workforce upon immigrating to Canada. In Ontario, highly skilled and educated professionals who arrive through skill-based programs such as the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program and Express Entry confront multiple obstacles when trying to find work in Ontario, including receiving credential recognition, navigating discriminatory hiring practices, acquiring Canadian experience and building familiarity with the Canadian job market in their professional field. This leaves internationally trained professionals across various sectors, especially healthcare, without recognition of their credentials, experiences and training, making it difficult for them to succeed in Ontario. Many immigrants undergo deskilling as well as immense mental health and financial pressures as they navigate the system.

The lack of support for internationally trained and educated workers in non-regulated professions as well as regulated healthcare professions leads to underemployment, loss of income and tax revenue for the province and labour shortages. One such impact has been the noticeable shortage of healthcare workers throughout this pandemic.

Therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Legislative Assembly of the Province of Ontario, enacts as follows:

Foreign Credential Recognition Advisory Committee

1 (1) The Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development shall, no more than 90 days after the day this section comes into force, establish a Foreign Credential Recognition Advisory Committee.

Composition

(2) The Foreign Credential Recognition Advisory Committee shall be composed of members appointed by the Minister.

Same

(3) The Minister shall ensure that the Foreign Credential Recognition Advisory Committee includes members of the following groups:

1. Representatives from local immigration partnerships and settlement organization non-profits that serve immigrants.
2. Representatives from language access organizations.
3. Internationally educated non-regulated professionals.

Remuneration and expenses

(4) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may determine the remuneration and expenses of any person appointed under subsection (2).

Appropriation required

(5) Subsection (4) does not apply unless money has been appropriated by the Legislature for the purpose of that subsection.

Foreign Credential Recognition Advisory Committee — functions

2 (1) The Foreign Credential Recognition Advisory Committee shall inquire into the following matters and make relevant recommendations to the Minister:

1. Pathways to certifying and recognizing the academic credentials of internationally educated immigrants with higher education degrees, including those in the Ontario Immigrant Nominee Program.
2. Ensuring fair and non-discriminatory hiring practices that do not single out applicants for having foreign degrees and other credentials.
3. Effective approaches to supporting agencies and organizations that serve immigrants through employment counselling.

Same

(2) The Foreign Credential Recognition Advisory Committee shall determine which languages, in addition to English and French, its recommendations shall be published in for the purposes of subsection 5 (1).

Internationally Trained and Educated Healthcare Professions Advisory Committee

3 (1) The Minister of Health shall, no more than 90 days after the day this section comes into force, establish an Internationally Trained and Educated Healthcare Professions Advisory Committee.

Composition

(2) The Internationally Trained and Educated Healthcare Professions Advisory Committee shall be composed of members appointed by the Minister.

Same

(3) The Minister shall ensure that the Internationally Trained and Educated Healthcare Professions Advisory Committee includes members of the following groups:

1. Representatives from relevant regulatory, advisory and licensing bodies for all regulated healthcare professions recognized by the Ministry of Health.
2. Representatives from academic programs in Ontario that provide continuing education or bridging programs for internationally trained healthcare professionals.
3. Representatives from associations of internationally trained healthcare professions.
4. Representatives from healthcare labour unions and associations.

Remuneration and expenses

(4) The Lieutenant Governor in Council may determine the remuneration and expenses of any person appointed under subsection (2).

Appropriation required

(5) Subsection (4) does not apply unless money has been appropriated by the Legislature for the purpose of that subsection.

Internationally Trained and Educated Healthcare Professions Advisory Committee — functions

4 (1) The Internationally Trained and Educated Healthcare Professions Advisory Committee shall inquire into the following matters and make relevant recommendations to the Minister:

1. Developing provincially regulated practice-ready pathways in conjunction with the relevant regulatory bodies for internationally trained regulated healthcare professionals.
2. Developing provincially regulated programs that provide relevant clinical experience for internationally trained physicians looking to become licensed for practice.
3. Establishing fair and non-discriminatory hiring practices for licensed and certified internationally trained healthcare professionals.

Same

(2) The Internationally Trained and Educated Healthcare Professions Advisory Committee shall determine which languages, in addition to English and French, its recommendations shall be published in for the purposes of subsection 5 (2).

Publication

5 (1) The Minister shall publish the recommendations of the Foreign Credential Recognition Advisory Committee on a Government of Ontario website in English, French and any additional languages the Advisory Committee has determined appropriate in accordance with subsection 2 (2).

Same

(2) The Minister shall publish the recommendations of the Internationally Trained and Educated Healthcare Professions Advisory Committee on a Government of Ontario website in English, French and any additional languages the Advisory Committee has determined appropriate in accordance with subsection 4 (2).

Progress report

6 (1) Within one year of establishing the Foreign Credential Recognition Advisory Committee in accordance with subsection 1 (1), the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development shall develop a progress report based on the recommendations from the Advisory Committee and submit the report to the Legislative Assembly.

Same

(2) Within one year of establishing the Internationally Trained and Educated Healthcare Professions Advisory Committee in accordance with subsection 3 (1), the Minister of Health shall develop a progress report based on the recommendations from the Advisory Committee and submit the report to the Legislative Assembly.

Commencement

7 This Act comes into force on the day it receives Royal Assent.

Short title

8 The short title of this Act is the *Fairness for Ontario's Internationally Trained Workers Act, 2022*.