

## Bill #2

### Newcomer Empowerment Act

WHEREAS “Canadians understand that diversity is our strength. We know that Canada has succeeded — culturally, politically, economically — because of our diversity, not in spite of it.”<sup>1</sup>; and

WHEREAS Canada stands to gain \$13.4 to \$17 billion from improvements in learning recognition<sup>2</sup>; and

WHEREAS “Education and work experience are among the valuable assets new immigrants bring to Canada... Yet newcomers face barriers that may impede the recognition of their credentials and work experience, with consequences for their labour market performance and broader integration within Canadian society.”<sup>3</sup>

THEREFORE, HER MAJESTY, BY AND WITH THE ADVICE AND CONSENT OF THE YOUTH PARLIAMENT OF MANITOBA ENACTS AS FOLLOWS:

**1. As of January 1, 2018, the Government of Canada shall establish the **Canadian Recognition of Education and Degrees Taskforce [CREDIT]**.**

- (1) **CREDIT** will be a federal body responsible for assisting in the process of recognizing professional credentials and previous learning obtained outside of Canada
  - (a) **CREDIT** will act as an intermediary between provincial/national regulatory bodies and newcomers in their pursuit of degree and previous learning recognition.
- (2) A National Commissioner for Fairness in Learning Recognition will be established and be responsible for the operation of **CREDIT**.
  - (a) The Commissioner will be responsible for assessing the registration practices of regulated professions to ensure that they are transparent, objective, impartial, and fair.

**2. **CREDIT** will have the ability to designate equivalency status to foreign degrees and certifications.**

- (1) The recognition of degrees and previous learning will be based on a standard metric that will be at the discretion of **CREDIT**
- (2) **CREDIT** will work with provincial accreditation bodies along with provincial and territorial governments to create national standards for professions.

---

<sup>1</sup> Trudeau, Justin. “Diversity is Canada’s Strength.” 26 November, 2015, Canada House, London, UK.

<sup>2</sup> Grant, Michael. “Brain Gain 2015: The State of Canada’s Learning Recognition System.” Conference Board of Canada, 2015

<sup>3</sup> Houle, Rene, and Yssaad, Lahouaria. “Perspectives on Labour and Income” Statistics Canada, 2010

- a. National accreditation bodies will be comprised of 25% **CREDIT** representatives, 25% Ministry of Education and 50% from professional association representatives of that profession.
    - b. If a province or professional associations does not accept a degree or adhere to the standards as set out by **CREDIT**, an issue will be ordered.
  - (3) **CREDIT** will establish a database of known equivalences that will be made publicly available.
3. **CREDIT** will provide support services and offer financial support for newcomers who are going through degree and previous learning recognition programs.
- (1) In instances where degrees cannot be recognized and recertification is needed, the recertification will be paid for by the Government of Canada
    - a. Recertification must be started within 2 years of arrival in Canada
    - b. If recertification is not done continuously once started, **CREDIT** funding and support will be withdrawn
    - c. In cases of needed experiential learning, **CREDIT** will assist the newcomer in securing this experience
      - i. **CREDIT** will assist newcomers in this process through the creation of a practical/experiential learning board where businesses will be able to advertise openings.
  - (2) Other supports provided through **CREDIT** will include, but are not limited to;
    - a. Professional and conversational language classes in English and French
    - b. Assistance in registering for programs and further schooling
    - c. Assistance in job search
4. Other measures will ensure the protection of newcomer's rights in Canada. These measures will include:
- (1) The eradication of closed work permits tying individuals to one employer
  - (2) International recruiters for private businesses will be required to register with **CREDIT**
  - (3) All newcomers to Canada will be fully informed of their rights under the program and Canadian law before and when they enter Canada.
    - a. In a case of legal dispute, all newcomers will be given access to legal counsel before deportation action can be taken
    - b. A transparent, impartial appeal process for migrant workers with workplace issues will be established.