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NEWS RELEASE

Grand Forks Immigrant Integration Efforts Featured in Regional Report on Immigrant Integration

DATE: October 2, 2014

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Grand Forks, ND – The immigrant integration efforts in the Grand Forks area are one set of dozens of Midwestern initiatives featured in a new regional report showcasing state-, city-, and civic-level action around immigration, even as congressional reforms and administrative action are stalled.

Co-published by The Chicago Council on Global Affairs and the American Immigration Council, “Reimagining the Midwest: Immigration Initiatives and the Capacity of Local Leadership,” comes at the close of National Welcoming Week (September 13-21), a series of events across the country that highlight contributions of immigrants to American communities and bring together immigrants and native-born community members.

“We are pleased the report showcases some of the amazing work and dedicated partners who have been working on immigrant integration issues over the past several years,” said Bret Weber, Grand Forks City Council Member and Chair of the Grand Forks Immigrant Integration Initiative. “What is most exciting is just how diverse Grand Forks has become and the incredible opportunities that come with being such a welcoming community.”

The is the first report of its kind to focus exclusively on the Midwest region and represents an extensive review of the vast array of immigrant integration initiatives at the state, municipal, metropolitan, and civic levels. Highlighting initiatives that are fostering immigrant entrepreneurs, passing integration ordinances, promoting civic engagement, evaluating economic impact, providing education resources, and celebrating cultural diversity, among other efforts, the report urges leaders to:

- 1) Think creatively about opportunities for local action despite federal inaction around immigration reform.

- 2) Leverage community institutions and the private sector to maximize resources.
- 3) Foster inclusive metro-wide and regional collaboration, recognizing that communities and neighborhoods are interconnected.

“The level of action here in the Midwest is indicative of a remarkable shift in rhetoric from previous years,” says Juliana Kerr, a co-author of the paper and director of The Chicago Council’s work on immigration. “To be fair, however, the Midwest does have examples of restrictive policies and there is still much work to be done.”

The report acknowledges that while immigration reform needs to be conducted at a federal level, local initiatives can work to increase immigrant integration at the community level, whatever the shape federal reform ultimately takes.

“The Midwest provides excellent examples of how regional, state and local entities can implement effective strategies that both integrate immigrants and foster economic development,” says report co-author Paul McDaniel, research fellow at the American Immigration Council.

Generous support for this report was provided by the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation. This report builds on previous Chicago Council reports on immigration, including [*US Economic Competitiveness at Risk: A Midwest Call to Action on Immigration Reform*](#), a [February 2014 survey](#) that found Midwestern business leaders support immigration reform, [May 2013 survey](#) that found public impressions of immigration flows are exaggerated, and a [December 2012 survey](#) that found informed Midwesterners are more likely to support immigration reform.

Midwest-focused reports from the American Immigration Council, which also provided a foundation for this report, include [*Revitalization in the Heartland of America: Welcoming Immigrant Entrepreneurs for Economic Development*](#), [*Immigrant Entrepreneurs, Innovation, and Welcoming Initiatives by State*](#), and [*The Economic and Political Impact of Immigrants, Latinos, and Asians State by State*](#).

About The Chicago Council on Global Affairs

The Chicago Council on Global Affairs, founded in 1922, is an independent, non-partisan organization committed to educating the public—and influencing the public discourse—on global issues of the day. The Council provides a forum in Chicago for world leaders, policymakers and other experts to speak to its members and the public on these issues. Long known for its public opinion surveys of American views on foreign policy, The Chicago Council also brings together stakeholders to examine issues and offer policy insight into areas such as global agriculture, the global economy, global energy, global cities, global security and global immigration. Learn more at thechicagocouncil.org and follow [@ChicagoCouncil](https://twitter.com/ChicagoCouncil) for updates.

About the American Immigration Council

The American Immigration Council is a non-profit, non-partisan, organization based in Washington D.C. Our legal, education, policy and exchange programs work to strengthen America by honoring our immigrant history and shaping how Americans think and act towards immigration now and in the future. Learn more at AmericanImmigrationCouncil.org or follow us on Twitter [@ImmCouncil](https://twitter.com/ImmCouncil).

