

TESTIMONY ON BILL 5207

February 25, 2010

To the Labor & Public Employees Committee:

Good afternoon. I am in favor and fully support Raised Bill 5207. Your consideration and a YES vote will be greatly appreciated.

My son's life is seriously impacted by the scrutiny of background checks. August 2004, at age 18, my son Joseph was arrested and charged for possession of narcotics. He was not alone. Though there were no drugs found in his possession, the judge and prosecutors believed the false report of the arresting officers. (The people who actually had the drugs were assigned to programs.) My son was given one year prison sentence, which was served in full, and four years probation, which was completed October 2009.

Since his release Joseph has applied to many businesses, including Kohl's, Walmart, Sam's Club, etc. He was denied employment over and over, and was always told that because of his felony record, they cannot hire him. He recently took training for a forklift driver, and is now certified. Several weeks ago he applied to three companies where there was an opening, and was denied by all. Though he would plead to employers for a chance to prove himself, it was to no avail.

My son is very manageable, respectful, and eager to learn and work. He used to be pleasant, but I now see a drastic change in him; he's becoming angry and negative and has increased his use of alcohol. In addition, with no job, my son is ordered to pay \$76 per week child support.

If banning the box would be passed, he could apply for a state job, and be judged on his abilities and work experience.

Respectfully,

Audrey Richards
16 Cassius Street
New Haven CT 06519
203-782-9193
member of People Against Injustice