

March 2, 2016

H.B. No. 5237 AN ACT CONCERNING FAIR CHANCE EMPLOYMENT

Dear Senator Gomes, Senator Hwang, Representative Tercyak and members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee.

My name is Joanie Masot and I am a Southington resident. I am testifying today in support of H.B. No. 5237 "Ban the Box." I have personally been on the side of not being able to obtain employment due to my past criminal history. I believe when you are completing an application for employment and check the box that you have a criminal background or have been arrested your application is automatically filed away and not looked at again. You are not even given a chance to explain personally as to your record/conviction. I do believe that persons with a criminal background/history should be given the opportunity to explain their history.

This should not be a box or question on the application and can be discussed at a later date if the person is being granted further consideration after having their application reviewed and have an interview set up.

Automatically filing or trashing the application once the box is checked in pre-judgment which the world is full of.

There are many trustworthy citizens in our state that have worked hard to turn their lives around and become law abiding citizens. Without being able to obtain employment is a continued cycle and adds to poverty.

I am grateful to be given the chance to obtain employment with a criminal history. Being hired and able to take care of my family has been one of the most valuable points in my returning to the community and maintaining my recovery and well-being.

I ask you today to give others a chance and "Ban the Box."

Thank you for your time and attention in this very important issue.

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