



DATE: Thursday, February 16, 2017

TO: Labor and Public Employees Committee:

FROM: Justine Couvares, Chief Program Officer Chrysalis Center Inc

RE: HB 6219 – 'AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNITY REENTRY BY PERSONS WHO WERE INCARCERATED.'

Good Afternoon Senator Gomes, Senator Miner, Representative Porter, Representative Bocchino and distinguished members of the Labor and Public Employees Committee:

My name is Justine Couvares, Chief Program Officer at Chrysalis Center Inc, Chrysalis Center is a private, non-profit, socially innovative multiservice organization that serves individuals and families living in the State of Connecticut.

Chrysalis helps those living in poverty, Veterans, woman and children, young adults and individuals who are struggling with mental health, addiction, HIV/AIDS, those returning from incarceration and homelessness. Through job training, employment services, housing and other community healthcare services, Chrysalis Center helps individuals transform their lives.

I appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 6219 – 'An Act Concerning Community Reentry by Persons Who Were Incarcerated.'

The services we provide to persons formally incarcerated are focused on a strong career track, mid-skill, stackable credentials in various industries and specifically in the trades industry. Trainings such as OSHA 10-30, welding, masonry, carpentry, fork lift, scaffolding, customer service and culinary trainings are provided among others. Job Developer staff works in the community with employers who would hire our clients, despite their felony record, with the knowledge that Chrysalis Center would support the client as they transitioned to fulltime employment.

Clients in the ESN service gain a career skill set with above minimum wage earnings, thus reducing the likelihood of them returning to incarceration resulting in stronger families and stronger neighborhoods.

Information re: the bill:

AN ACT CONCERNING COMMUNITY REENTRY BY PERSONS WHO WERE INCARCERATED.  
Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Assembly convened:

That the general statutes be amended to provide (1) persons recently released from correctional facilities with enhanced employment opportunities, and (2) tax incentives to employers who provide employment opportunities to persons recently released from correctional facilities.

Statement of Purpose:

To improve the rate of successful community reentry for persons released from correctional facilities through the provision of enhanced employment opportunities.

Thank you for your attention to this important issue. Please do not hesitate to contact me with any questions you may have.

Justine Couvares

[jcouvares@chrysaliscenterct.org](mailto:jcouvares@chrysaliscenterct.org)

860-263-4414