



**Connecticut Conference
United Church of Christ**

125 Sherman Street
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**Testimony in Support of House Bill 6219: An Act Concerning Community Reentry by Persons who were Incarcerated
Submitted by, Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate
Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ
February 16, 2017**

Senator Gomes, Representative Porter, Senator Miner and distinguished members of the Committee on Labor and Public Employees,

I am Michele Mudrick, Legislative Advocate for the Connecticut Conference, United Church of Christ and I am writing today in support of House bill 6219: An Act Concerning Community Reentry by Persons who were Incarcerated to improve the rate of successful community reentry for persons released from correctional facilities through the provision of enhanced employment opportunities.

I am writing on behalf of the 237 congregations and more than 67,500 people in our state's churches. In fact, the United Church of Christ (UCC) is the largest Protestant denomination in Connecticut. Nationally, the UCC has more than 5,700 congregations with nearly 1 million members. In 2014 the assembled delegates and ministers of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ met and voted on a Resolution that calls upon the Connecticut Conference to support the implementation to End Mass Incarceration for Non-Violent Offenses and to advocate for passage of legislation that promotes alternatives to mass incarceration such as reentry services for ex-offenders and the implementation of restorative justice in all possible circumstances.

We support enhanced employment opportunities of persons recently released from correctional facilities. We are also supportive of tax incentives to employers who provide employment opportunities to persons recently released from correctional facilities.

People need access to a wide variety of resources at the time they are released from incarceration, especially employment opportunities. Support and resources are important to achieve consistent, long-term stability. It has been proved that there is a cost saving when there is success in preventing incarceration and reducing recidivism. Employment after incarceration is crucial to achieving these cost savings. All of God's children deserve assistance after they have been incarcerated. We therefore, urge the Committee to support House Bill 6219 concerning community reentry by persons who were incarcerated.

Thank you for your work and the opportunity to supply written testimony in support of and House Bill 6219.

Blessings,
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