

6921

AN ACT CONCERNING DISCRIMINATION BASED ON A PERSON'S CRIMINAL HISTORY.

Hi. My name is Sooyong Kwon. I am a sophomore at Yale University studying Ethics, Politics, and Economics. It has been two great years since I've commenced my studies, and I have found in CT a home.

I am here right now to speak on a issue I DEEPLY care about.

Prisons generally seek to serve FOUR purposes: retribution, deterrence, incapacitation, and rehabilitation. I want us to focus on the last pillar, which I will argue is the MOST IMPORTANT one.

Not only does rehabilitation DRASTICALLY reduce the rate at which people return to prison, rehabilitation UPHOLDS the idea that people deserve a SECOND CHANCE in life. By serving their sentences, people have paid what the society deemed to be the costs for their mistakes. It is JUST that their sentences do not hinder their rehabilitation process.

Yet, once people are labeled as criminals, they are discriminated against in employment, housing aids, voting rights, educational opportunities, social welfare, and other public benefits. We cannot stress this enough: Access to a Job is crucial for self-sufficiency. If people are denied employment, it only TRAPS them in a DETRIMENTAL cycle of poverty and crime.

For an incarceration system where people do not return, we MUST pass H.B. 6921. For a more just CT, we MUST pass the H.B. 6921. Thank you.