



State of Connecticut COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS AND OPPORTUNITIES

450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 2, Hartford, CT 06103

Promoting Equality and Justice for all People

Labor Committee Public Hearing –March 11, 2021 CHRO Testimony Regarding HB 6596 – AAC Manager Salaries and Occupational Licensing Regulation

Representative Porter, Senator Kushner, Senator Sampson, Representative Arora, and members of the Labor Committee, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 6596, An Act Concerning Manager Salaries and Occupational Licensing Regulation.

The Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities supports HB 6596 in its limitation of discipline that a licensing agency can take against a certain professionals who have been convicted of a felony. Under this bill, the licensing entity can only discipline said individual if the felony is reasonably related to the licensee's ability to safely or competently engage in the practice of their profession. As the purpose of licensing is to ensure competent practitioners in the field, this bill will fulfill the purpose of licensing without being unduly punitive against an individual who still needs to work and support their family.

Data has shown time and time again that Black, Latinx and other people of color are over-represented in our criminal justice system and are convicted at a disproportionately higher rate than White individuals.¹ By penalizing people simply because they were convicted of a felony that may not even be related to the licenses that they hold, the State further punishes the person beyond their prison sentence, effectively precluding them from engaging in their profession and working to support their families. This is both discriminatory against individuals and bad public policy. It prevents people from working, supporting their families and paying taxes while not protecting the public from unsafe or incompetent practitioners.

As the state entity charged with eliminating discrimination and protecting civil rights, the Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities supports the sections of HB 6596 relating to licensure.

¹ [Connecticut profile | Prison Policy Initiative](#)