

Dear President Obama:

I ask that you develop and implement an **Executive Order to Ban the Box at the federal level by limiting consideration of conviction history in federal government employment decisions and extending these limits to federal contractors by only doing business with those that have adopted and employ conviction history policies that are consistent with Ban the Box.**

As a public official, I am dedicated to pursuing policies that enhance the public safety; providing individuals access to meaningful employment advances that goal. The research done around this issue clearly shows that employment of people with a criminal record not only **reduces the recidivism rate**, but it goes a long way toward helping **families reunite** and provides parents with a mechanism to **maintain their child support obligations.**

This is in addition to the undeniable truth that encouraging and supporting policies that funnel people into the economic mainstream allows them to shoulder their fair share of local, state, and national taxes. Individuals with criminal records who are allowed access to employment are not a drain on the social services network; they have purchasing power and contribute to the continued success of local businesses; and they are able to save for their retirement, which contributes to the health of our Social Security system.

This issue has true bipartisan backing, and politicians from all over the country and from all political persuasions have been outspoken in their support. Most recently, Georgia Governor Nathan Deal, a Republican, signed an executive order that prohibited state agencies from asking about criminal history in initial employment applications. In 2014, solidly Republican Nebraska did the same. To date, 14 states have Banned the Box, some limiting that prohibition to state agencies, others extending it to private businesses.

Most importantly, at least 100 counties and cities have adopted Ban the Box ordinances in recognition of the detrimental effect of discriminatory hiring on their localities. This is encouraging, because local efforts such as these show grassroots recognition of this problem, and they lay the foundation for national efforts such as this one.

Those local efforts are changing lives. No one speaks about those who never return to prison, the 300,000 people each year who never commit another crime, and the determination those men and women have to stay out of prison, to do what it takes to reintegrate back into their communities. They need help as they struggle to overcome the barriers places in their path.

I urge you to take this action, which is not about preventing employers from asking about criminal histories, but about delaying that question until an employer has had a chance to see the applicant as a human being with potential worthy of consideration for an interview or employment offer based on his or her qualifications.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

City/State \_\_\_\_\_

email address \_\_\_\_\_