

HEARTLAND ALLIANCE

NATIONAL INITIATIVES

The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

October 13, 2015

Dear Mr. President:

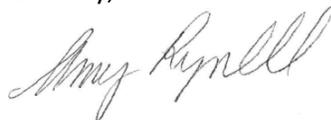
I am writing to urge you to adopt a federal “fair chance” hiring policy so that formerly incarcerated Americans and people with convictions in their past are not unfairly shut out of employment and have a fair chance at a job with federal agencies and federal contractors.

Heartland Alliance’s National Initiatives on Poverty & Economic Opportunity is dedicated to ending chronic unemployment and poverty. We believe that every person deserves the opportunity to succeed in work—including returning citizens and people with criminal records. Yet each year, millions of individuals returning to their communities from jail or prison struggle to find jobs to support themselves and their families.

An estimated 70 million Americans, or one in three adults in the United States, has a record that will show up on a routine background check. This creates a serious barrier to employment for millions of workers, especially among low-income black men in communities of color hardest hit by decades of over-criminalization. At the same time, the evidence shows that employment can reduce recidivism among returning citizens, strengthen families, and make communities safer. Employment is fundamental to a prosperous America, and “ban the box” policies go a long way toward improving access to employment and economic opportunity for people with records.

Everyone deserves a second chance—including a chance to succeed in employment. With the stroke of a pen, the White House can transform the federal government into a model employer for people with records. We urge you to use your executive authority to adopt a federal fair-chance hiring policy that will help ensure that people returning from incarceration, and every person with a criminal record, can access and succeed in employment.

Sincerely,



Amy Rynell
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