



TO: Senate Committee on Judiciary
FROM: Mae Lee Browning, Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association
DATE: February 6, 2022
RE: Support for SB 1512

Chair Prozanski, Vice Chair Thatcher, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mae Lee Browning and I submit this testimony on behalf of OCDLA.

The Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association is a nonprofit professional association for experts, private investigators, and attorneys who represent Oregon's children and parents in juvenile dependency proceedings, youth in juvenile delinquency proceedings, adults in criminal proceedings at the trial and appellate level, as well as civil commitment proceedings throughout the state of Oregon.

OCDLA supports SB 1512. We want to thank Senator Dembrow's leadership on this issue, the work of the Council for State Governments, and the Senate Judiciary Committee for introducing this important bill that reduces barriers to occupational and professional licensing for people with criminal records.

SB 1512 gives Oregonians a chance to succeed. Oregonians should not continue to be punished after they have served their sentence, but they are because of the myriad collateral consequences that follow from a criminal conviction. "The unemployment rate for formerly incarcerated people stands at around 27 percent, and individuals with a conviction are subject to roughly 13,000 laws and regulations across the country that restrict their ability to procure an occupational license, a professional credential that is now required by over one in five jobs."¹ Fortunately, this Committee and legislative body has recognized the impact of collateral consequences on a person's ability to access housing, education, employment, and public benefits and has taken a step towards reducing those barriers by passing the expungement reform bill (SB 397) in 2021. SB 1512 continues that step in the right direction by reducing the inconsistency and uncertainty in professional and occupational licensing.

SB 1512 can help families and help communities heal. People can have hope knowing they can pursue education/training and obtain professional licensing to establish a lifelong career. By obtaining such licenses, people will be in a position to financially support their families, they will be invested in their communities and will be less likely to recidivate. We are a country who believes in second chances. Support second chances by voting yes on SB 1512.

¹ <https://www.arnoldventures.org/stories/states-are-reducing-the-collateral-consequences-of-criminal-records>