



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARGARET HALLOCK
CHAIR

TRINA REITER & SHAREEN SPRINGER
CO-VICE CHAIRS

JASON PELLEGRINI
TREASURER

ZOE ROMAN
SECRETARY

DALLAS BOGGS

DOUG BOVEE

ROB DODSON

MANDY DORMAN

KEVIN MOORE

TRINA RENFROW

HONORABLE ILISA ROOKE-LEY

STEVE HECKER

LEADERSHIP STAFF

PAUL SOLOMON
CO- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MORGEN JACO
CO- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LAURA JOHNSON
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

TAX ID # 93-0639815

To: Members of the Senate Committee on Education

From: Sponsors Inc.

Date: February 23, 2023

Re: Support for Senate Bill 517

Sponsors urges your support for Senate Bill 517, which will build on work done in 2021 to modernize Oregon's laws on how criminal records can be used in employment decisions.

Sponsors, Inc., is a national leader in the delivery of Reentry services. We offer a broad range of services—case management, employment assistance, housing, mental health services and mentoring—that people need in order to be successful upon returning to their community.

At Sponsors, we have learned through firsthand experiences, which has been repeatedly supported by data-driven research, that the negative impacts of a conviction do not end when a person has completed their sentence. Local, state, and federal statutes and regulations can make it all but impossible for some people with criminal records to truly begin rebuilding their lives. These consequences can affect everything from employment to voting eligibility, public benefit eligibility, and access to public and private housing.

While the true impact of existing laws is has yet to be calculated, we know with certainty that it is profound. Unfortunately in Oregon, despite Fair Chance Licensing laws, Oregonians can be denied licensure in many professions because of their criminal records.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

MARGARET HALLOCK
CHAIR

TRINA REITER & SHAREEN SPRINGER
CO-VICE CHAIRS

JASON PELLEGRINI
TREASURER

ZOE ROMAN
SECRETARY

DALLAS BOGGS

DOUG BOVEE

ROB DODSON

MANDY DORMAN

KEVIN MOORE

TRINA RENFROW

HONORABLE ILISA ROOKE-LEY

STEVE HECKER

LEADERSHIP STAFF

PAUL SOLOMON
CO- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

MORGEN JACO
CO- EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

LAURA JOHNSON
DIRECTOR OF PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

TAX ID # 93-0639815

Senate Bill 517 makes simple but meaningful changes to our current statute. Of note, SB 517 will:

- Honor the intent of our records clearance laws by prohibiting licensing bodies from denying license because of arrest or charge not resulting in conviction or adjudication; because of non-qualifying juvenile adjudication; or because of pardoned, sealed or set-aside convictions
- Establishes a predetermination process allowing people with criminal records to learn whether their criminal record is disqualifying before investing in satisfying state licensing requirements;
- Creates policy establishing that irrelevant records that do not bear on a person's ability to safely perform the duties of the occupation do not disqualify them from licensure.

SB 517 restricts consideration of criminal convictions to deny, suspend or revoke an occupational or professional license unless the conviction is substantially related to the duties of the occupation or profession. Through this meaningful reform, we can make employment, and thereby the opportunity for lifelong success, more accessible to Oregonians with conviction histories who are seeking a more hopeful path as contributing members of our communities.

Thank you for your consideration and support of SB 517.

Paul Solomon
Co-Executive Director, Sponsors Inc.

Morgen Jaco
Co-Executive Director, Sponsors Inc.