

POTENTIAL CITY-WIDE POLICY FOR REMOVING BARRIERS TO EMPLOYMENT
FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH CRIMINAL HISTORIES

IF YOU WISH TO SPEAK TO CITY COUNCIL, PRINT YOUR NAME, ADDRESS, AND EMAIL.

NAME (print)	ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE	Email
✓ <i>SPoke</i> Jil Heimensen	5028 SE Woodstock Blvd #4 97206	jilheimensen@gmail.com
✓ Jamie Partridge	5831 NE 10th Ave 97211	jamielp7206@aol.com
✓ <i>SPoke</i> Jacqueline Whitt	8340 NE Broadway #310 97220	JacquelineWhitt@gmail
✓ Tonia Dow	631 SE Taylor #209 97214	
✓ <i>del</i> JoAnn Herzigel	1411 SW Morrison St, PDX	joanne@eldersinaction.org
✓ Katy Murphy	3911 NE Killingsworth #6 Portland OR	murphy.katy@gmail.com
✓ <i>del</i> Jeremy Tichenor	9009 SE Causeway Ave #G31 Happy Valley	jest01122@gmail.com
✓ JOE WALSH		
✓ <i>del</i> Trudy Cooper	214 NE Thompson Portland 97212	teyuna@se@hotmail.com
✓ Sonji Young	21515 NW Sydney St 97006	youngsonji@gmail.com

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✓	LaQuida Landford		
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<i>spoke</i> James Pusey	117 NE Stanton	J.Pusey@comcast.net
Ramona Johnson	1355 162nd Ave Portland, OR	
<i>spoke</i> Michael Dejiro	495 NW Lenox St Hillsboro 97124	MD.Dejiro@icloud.com

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NAME (print)	ADDRESS AND ZIP CODE	Email
Annie Smith		
Mark Knutson		
STAKE Victor Merced	3136 NE 42 902	Vmerced@hacienda.com
Charles JOHNSON	simcha503@gmail.com	

Portland City Council
March 11, 2015

Testimony for the Ban the Box hearing:

My name is Renée LaChance and today I am coming out.

Few people know I was convicted of a felony in 1980 and spent my 21st year in a federal prison in California. As a fifth generation Oregonian, being sent to California was punishment enough for my egregious act. Yet, the punishment and shaming continues, 35 years later. The stigma has prevented me from telling anyone but the closest family and friends. It is my hope that my coming out today and lending my voice to this issue can help someone else as they return to society after incarceration.

After my release from prison I spent the next years fumbling for employment. I felt I had a tattoo on my forehead, big capital letters, FELON. No one wanted to hire a felon in a recession. I became a serial entrepreneur to get by. I was lucky I had an aptitude for business. Others in my situation were forced back to criminal activity to survive.

One of the businesses I founded and managed for 15 years was Just Out, Oregon's lesbian and gay news magazine that published for 30 years and was the foundation for Oregon's gay community.

Being self-employed did not save me from the ramifications of the box. The box prevented me from getting Small Business Administration loans for my business and other economic help normally afforded emerging companies.

Through the decades I periodically sought conventional employment. When I saw the box on an application I knew my honest answer would prevent me from getting an interview so I could get the job. Each time I faced the box I felt punished and shamed.

It is time to embrace reform and stop enabling life sentences for every felony.

Give felons a fair chance. Please vote to Ban the box.

Sincerely,



Renee LaChance
4125 SE 63rd
Portland, OR 97206



To: Portland City Council
From: Oregon Health Equity Alliance
Date: March 11, 2015
Re: Ban the Box Ordinance

Portland City Council Members:

The Oregon Health Equity Alliance (OHEA) would like to express our support for the City of Portland Ban the Box Ordinance. OHEA represents a collective effort of 38 member organizations who work together to make Oregon a more equitable place for all. Our coalition believes every Oregonian should have an equal chance to achieve their full health potential, and that is why we are supporting the Ban the Box Ordinance.

People in Portland who are struggling to overcome a past criminal history suffer from added discrimination that makes it difficult to find gainful employment. Black youth in particular are disproportionately arrested from crimes that are common to all youth. In Oregon, 11% of incarcerated people are African-American, yet only 2% of Oregon's population is African-American.

Studies show that having a criminal record reduces the likelihood of a job callback by 50%. The Ban the Box ordinance will remove questions about arrests, convictions and incarceration from job applications. It will *not* prevent employers from asking for a criminal background check. Removing this question will simply allow applicants to get a proverbial foot in the door, so they can explain their past history in face-to-face interactions with potential employers. This will help build a more equitable Portland that supports a fair chance for all.

OHEA urges your full support of the Ban the Box Ordinance. Thank you for your commitment to our communities.

Joseph Santos-Lyons, APANO, OHEA co-Chair
Midge Purcell, Urban League of Portland, OHEA co-Chair

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Michelle Ganow-Jones <michelle@noworegon.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2015 2:01 PM
To: Hales, Mayor; Commissioner Fish; Commissioner Saltzman; Commissioner Fritz; Commissioner Novick
Cc: Council Clerk – Testimony; Moore-Love, Karla
Subject: Oregon NOW Urges Support for Ban the Box
Attachments: OregonNOWbanthebox.pdf

March 11, 2015

Portland City Council

Sent via email (see attached PDF)

Dear Mayor Hales and City Council members,

I am writing to urge your support for the Ban the Box Ordinance under consideration by the Portland City Council. Oregon NOW's board voted to endorse Ban the Box because we know that removing this barrier to housing and employment will give thousands of people with previous arrest and conviction histories a fair chance to secure a job that will enable them to support their families and communities.

Two-thirds of women in prison are incarcerated for non-violent offenses, and the percentage of women who enter the criminal justice system with a disturbing history of emotional, physical, and sexual abuse is reported to be 85 to 90 percent. Giving women a fair shot at housing and employment is especially critical to their ability to pursue financial stability, keep their families intact, and reduce the risk of recidivism.

Oregon NOW supports banning the box not only because of its potential to benefit women and their families, but also because we know that people of color are disproportionately represented in prison populations and therefore disproportionately impacted by employment and housing barriers. All members of our community should have a fair chance at being positive contributors to our city.

Thank you for voting to Ban the Box and taking this important action to create a more equitable community.

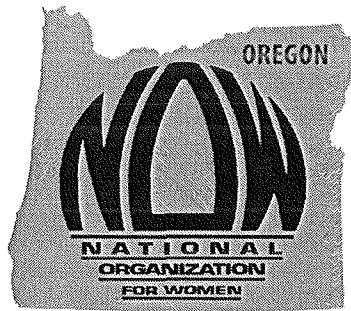
Sincerely,

Michelle

Michelle Ganow-Jones

Executive Director

Michelle Ganow-Jones
Oregon NOW
(503) 758-7378
michelle@noworegon.org



March 11, 2015

Portland City Council
Via email

Dear Mayor Hales and City Council members,

I am writing to urge your support for the Ban the Box Ordinance under consideration by the Portland City Council. Oregon NOW's board voted to endorse Ban the Box because we know that removing this barrier to housing and employment will give thousands of people with previous arrest and conviction histories a fair chance to secure a job that will enable them to support their families and communities.

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Thank you for voting to Ban the Box and taking this important action to create a more equitable community.

Sincerely,

Michelle Ganow-Jones
Executive Director

Moore-Love, Karla

From: Andrea Paluso <andrea@familyforward.org>
Sent: Wednesday, March 11, 2015 12:32 PM
To: Moore-Love, Karla
Subject: written testimony on Ban the Box
Attachments: Support for Banning the Box_Family Forward Oregon.pdf

Karla,

I wanted to submit written testimony for an issue the Council is considering today.

Thank you,
Andrea Paluso
Executive Director
Family Forward Oregon & Family Forward Action
503.928.6789



CHANGE IS POSSIBLE. CHANGE IS HAPPENING.

March 11, 2015
Testimony in support of Ban the Box

Dear Mayor Hales and Portland City Commissioners,

My name is Andrea Paluso and I'm the Executive Director of Family Forward Oregon and the Co-Chair of the Fair Shot for All Coalition. We advocate on economic security issues that impact women and families in Oregon.

We cannot build a sustainable economy or community when we functionally exclude thousands of applicants from accessing employment, as our current system does. People who have been a part of the criminal justice system - and the families who rely on them - deserve a chance to participate fully in work and public life. However, many qualified job seekers are unable to obtain employment because of a previous criminal record.

Removing questions about convictions and arrests from job applications and delaying inquiry into an applicant's criminal history until later in the hiring process will remove an unnecessary barrier to employment for many people in Portland who desperately need a fair chance.

In an era of mass incarceration, where the United States makes up 5 percent of the world's population but has 25 percent of the world's prison population, we must make changes to how we shape public policy. We can take one small step in Portland by allowing the thousands of people in our city who have criminal records to access employment without facing undue barriers and discrimination.

Mass incarceration disproportionately affects communities of color. Nationally, African-American men are imprisoned at seven times the rate of their white counterparts and at three times the rate of Latinos. Black women are nearly three times more likely to go to prison than white women. And Latina women are 1.6 times more likely to be jailed than white women. The box on an employment application is significantly more likely to discourage or exclude people of color than their white counterparts from seeking or obtaining employment.¹

We are increasingly criminalizing poverty, including maternal poverty. Some who are now barred from many jobs because of a criminal record, have simply been penalized because they were not able to pay fines. Creating a spiral of debt and involvement with the criminal justice system that could and should have been avoided. Still others are being criminalized because they lack adequate access to child care and other supports. We've all heard stories recently about women who were forced to leave their children unattended while they

¹ U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics, Prisoners in 2011, 8 tbl.8 (Dec. 2012). Retrieved 8 March 2015 from: http://sentencingproject.org/doc/publications/rd_ICCPR%20Race%20and%20Justice%20Shadow%20Report.pdf



CHANGE IS POSSIBLE. CHANGE IS HAPPENING.

applied for work or worked a shift at a fast food restaurant. We are at a critical juncture where we need to ask ourselves whether we want to continue to criminalize poverty in this way – further compromising the economic security of our families – or whether we are willing to reinvest in these families, helping them secure employment, and providing access to the services that are known to reduce poverty and lead to economic advancement.

Families are put at greater risk of poverty when parents who have records are unable to find work because of institutional barriers. **Research has shown that 1 in every 50 children in the United States has a parent in prison² and over half of those parents are serving time for non-violent offenses.³ Here in Oregon, more than 75 percent of Oregon's female prisoners are mothers** and, as of 2012, there were 7,520 parents in prison in our state.⁴ That's not to mention the women in the U.S. who will become parents behind bars: 1 in 25 women in state prisons and 1 in 33 in federal prisons are pregnant when they enter prison.⁵

This shift to large-scale women's imprisonment in our state and across the country has resulted in an increasing number of children who experience economic insecurity. Mothers are now the primary or sole breadwinners in nearly 40 percent of families nationwide.⁶ As we continue to imprison increasing numbers of women and mothers, this has grave effects for the families who depend on them, particularly families of color who already suffer disproportionately from a lack of access to high-quality employment.

We can start to change this system today by reducing the barriers that mothers, and other parents, who have criminal records face as they try to rebuild their lives and the lives of their children. Too many are faced with insurmountable barriers to economic security- including having to check a box that doesn't give a full picture of that past or their current ability to be a productive member of the workforce.

Please ban the box in Portland and help all families get a fair chance at economic opportunity.

2 Glaze, L., & Maruschak, L. (2008). Parents in prison and their minor children. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

3 Mumola, C. (2004). Incarcerated parents and their children. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

4 Hoffman, Hannah. "Jail Birds: The Women of Oregon's Coffee Creek Correctional Facility." Jail Birds: The Women of Oregon's Coffee Creek Correctional Facility. Willamette Week, 18 Jan. 2012. Retrieved 8 March 2015 from: http://www.wweek.com/portland/article-18696-jail_birds.html

5 Maruschak, L. (2008). Medical problems of prisoners. Washington, D.C.: Bureau of Justice Statistics.

6 Wang, W., Parker, K., & Taylor, P. (2013, May 29). Breadwinner Moms. Pew Research Center Publication. Retrieved 22 March 2014, from <http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2013/05/29/breadwinner-moms/>

Parsons, Susan

From: Tia Henderson <tia@upstreampublichealth.org>
Sent: Tuesday, March 10, 2015 5:41 PM
To: Moore-Love, Karla; Council Clerk – Testimony; Hales, Mayor; Commissioner Fish; Commissioner Fritz; Commissioner Novick; Commissioner Saltzman
Subject: Testimony on Ban the Box policy
Attachments: Ban the Box Testimony 3.10.15.doc

Hello Mayor Hales, Commissioners and respected clerks,
Please see the attached testimony for tomorrow's Ban the Box hearing tomorrow. I look forward to your passing this important policy that will help Portland families.

Thank you,
Dr. Tia Henderson

Please note that I use Friday mornings as my writing days for various reports and articles and will not be responsive to email during that time. Thank you for your patience.



Tia Henderson, PhD Research Manager at Upstream Public Health
tia@upstreampublichealth.org | office 503-284-6390 |



To: Honorable Mayor Charlie Hales, Commissioner Nick Fish, Commissioner Amanda Fritz, Commissioner Steve Novick, and Commissioner Dan Saltzman
From: Tia Henderson, PhD, Research Manager, Upstream Public Health
Date: March 10, 2015
Re: Ban the Box Policy

Dear Mayor Hales and Commissioners,

We all deserve an opportunity to succeed and contribute to Portland's thriving economy. Unfortunately, when employers refuse to consider applicants who have made mistakes in their past, they are passing up qualified applicants. You can fix an imbalance and remove an existing barrier to Portland families. I urge you to support this policy to remove the question about criminal record history from employment applications.

My name is Dr. Tia Henderson, the Research Manager at Upstream Public Health, a statewide nonprofit focused on improving the health of all Oregonians through sound policy. I want to commend the Mayor and Commissioners for bringing forward this important piece of legislation. As a Portland resident I appreciate the government taking this proactive role in looking after community wellbeing and removing a barrier to our employment system that overwhelmingly affects people of color and those experiencing economic hardship¹. Communities across the country² are passing policies just like this one. The results are showing that this can help our larger community as well as the people who are employed. Banning the box can result in an increase in hiring that helps the economy— where more than 9 of 10 individuals with records ultimately are hired for a job³. It can result in a decline in repeat offenses¹, a return in funds to taxpayers⁴, and can create positive mental health outcomes for people with records and their families⁵.

Everyone deserves the opportunity to obtain a job and have income to pay for housing and food. These are basic needs for supporting a family, feeling pride from work well done, promoting positive mental health and lifelong physical health. Right now individuals with prior arrests on their record, no matter how minor, have a very low chance of being considered for a job⁶. When a hiring manager does not look past a checked box, they evaluate the candidate on a previous unknown mistake instead of their actual experience and expertise. The policy before you removes a barrier to employment. Banning the box opens an opportunity that encourages an employer to discuss the circumstances of a potential employee's history in the interview process. Banning the Box also gives Portland families a second chance for prosperity. The sooner we have a policy in place, the sooner we'll see communitywide benefits. Thank you for your time.

¹ Mundy et al. (2009) *The State of Black Oregon*, the [Urban League of Portland](#).

² D'Alessio, S.J., Stolzenberg, L, and J.L. Flexon, 2014, *The Effect of Hawaii's Ban the Box Law on Repeat Offending*, [American Journal of Criminal Justice](#)

³ Atkinson, D. and K. Lockwood (2014), *The Benefits of Ban the Box: A Case Study of Durham, NC*, [The Southern Coalition for Social Justice](#).

⁴ Drake, E.K., Aos, S., and M.G. Miller (2009), *Evidence-Based Public Policy Options to Reduce Crime and Criminal Justice Costs: Implications in Washington State*, *Victims and Offenders* (4), 170-196.

⁵ Todman et al. (2013) *U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Policy Guidance: A Mental Health Impact Assessment*, Institute of Social Exclusion, Adler School of Professional Psychology.

⁶ Holzer, H.J. (2007). *Collateral Costs: The Effects of Incarceration on the Employment and Earnings of Young Workers*, Bonn, Germany, [IZA Discussion Paper No. 3118](#)