



Sunday, November 15, 2015

Re: **Council File 14-0746**

Dear Honorable Council Members:

We believe in a God of second chances.

Yet every day, nearly one in three of our brothers or sisters is denied an opportunity for a second chance by a little check box on job applications—a little box that measures their present by the worst choice in their past.

*When people have paid their dues, they do not deserve a life sentence of joblessness.*

It's time for the City of Angeles to lead the way on adopting fair-chance hiring practices for job-seekers with records, starting by "banning the box" on job applications that asks about prior convictions and paving the way for accountability for employers who discriminate.

As the county's largest faith-based community organization with a collective membership of more than 40,000 families from 40 congregations, LA Voice tirelessly seeks to reform the structures in our city and county that deny people's full citizenship.

**The Fair Chance Initiative would:**

- *Level the applicants' playing field* by delaying conviction inquiry until an offer of employment is made
- *Allow applicants to appeal to employers* who renege on a job offer
- *Allow applicants to file an investigable complaint* with the City in the case of possible job discrimination

One quarter of all people returning from prison or jail return to this county, and many call Los Angeles home and search for work here as they rebuild their lives in a positive way. When they fail to succeed and then return to jail or prison, it is not their failure alone, but a failure we all share. We urge you to pass this ordinance with all haste.

During his recent visit to Curran-Fromhold Correctional Facility in Philadelphia, PA, Pope Francis declared, "[God] comes to meet us, so that he can restore our dignity as children of God. He wants to help us to set out again, to resume our journey, to recover our hope, to restore our faith and trust."

You can do so much to help our brothers and sisters with records set out again on their journey with great hope. We, the members and partners of LA Voice, need your support to pass the Fair Chance Initiative.

With hope and determination,

Fr. Gregory Boyle, S.J., Homeboy Industries  
Rabbi Sharon Brous; IKAR  
Rabbi Ronit Tsadok, IKAR  
Rev. David Farley, Director of Justice and Compassion Ministries, United Methodist Church,  
Cal-Pac Conference  
Shakeel Syed, President, Islamic Shura Council of Southern California  
Fr. Ted Gabriell, S.J., Pastor, Dolores Mission  
Ellie Hidalgo, Pastoral Associate, Dolores Mission  
Fr. Isidro Lepas, S.J., Dolores Mission  
Rev. Dr. Najuma Pollard-Smith, Word of Encouragement Church and Cecil Murray Center for  
Civic Engagement  
Dr. Yolanda Brown, Parish Life Director, Blessed Sacrament  
Fr. Kevin Ballard, Blessed Sacrament  
Fr. James Mott, OSA, Pastor, Mother of Good Counsel  
Fr. Tom Davis, OSA, Mother of Good Counsel  
Rev. Jaime Edwards-Acton, St. Stephen's Episcopal Church  
Imam Abdul Hafiz, Director, Prison Outreach Program of Islamic Shura Council of SoCal  
Rabbi Ron Stern, Stephen S. Wise Temple  
Rev. Kelvin Sauls, Holman United Methodist Church  
Rev. Oliver Buie, Holman United Methodist Church  
Rev. Gary Williams, Faith and Hamilton United Methodist Churches  
Rev. Martin Garcia, World Vision  
Sister Karen Collier, SSL, St. Agatha's Church  
Rev. Michael Fisher, Greater Mt. Zion Church  
Rev. Kevin Haah, New City Church  
Rabbi Mark Borovitz, Beit T'Shuvah  
Chaplain Adam Siegel, Beit T'Shuvah  
Minister Zachary Hoover, Executive Director, LA Voice