

Bill Signed to Increase Post-Incarceration Employment Opportunities

Written by Shelia Stubbs Press
Thursday, 28 March 2024 10:06 -



We create a stronger, safer Wisconsin by assisting individuals who have served time develop the skills needed not merely to survive, but to flourish.

MADISON, WI—After attending the signing at Governor Evers' office of Senate Bill 169—Relating to: establishing a hotline for employers interested in hiring individuals with a conviction record and Senate Bill 172—Relating to: establishing and operating community reentry centers and making an appropriation, Representative Shelia Stubbs (D-Madison) released the following statement:



“I would first like to thank my coauthors who served with me on the 2022 Legislative Council Study Committee on Increasing Offender Employment Opportunities, including Senator Mary Felzkowski, Representative Michael Schraa, Representative Evan Goyke, Representative Warren Petryk, former Senator Lena Taylor, and members of the community. Collectively, we

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were able to create 4 bipartisan bills to help formerly incarcerated Wisconsinites achieve success when reentering the community, two of which were signed into law by Governor Evers today.

Senate Bill 169, which establishes a hotline for people looking to hire employees with a history of incarceration, makes the hiring process simpler by granting easy access to information for employers seeking to hire previously incarcerated people. By clarifying this process, Senate Bill 169 will increase the likelihood that businesses will actively seek and select qualified applicants with a history of incarceration.

Senate Bill 172, which requires the Department of Corrections to contract with community partners to create and operate community reentry centers that provide housing, employment, healthcare, and numerous other resources to community members exiting the prison system. As a former probation and parole agent, I have seen firsthand the needs of our neighbors leaving the prison system. Too often, when these individuals re-enter the community, they are left without the resources to succeed in the outside world.

We want people returning from prison to access secure housing, further their education, and get good, family-sustaining jobs. We want them to succeed in the community and to break the cycle of recidivism. They have a wide variety of skill sets and lived experiences that enrich our state and most importantly, they want to improve their lives beyond the circumstances that led to their incarceration.

By Governor Evers signing these two bills into law, we will give our previously incarcerated community members the best possible chance of success by giving them access to services and trained personnel who understand their specialized needs and by helping employers feel confident actively seeking previously incarcerated applicants.

We build a stronger, safer Wisconsin by helping individuals who have served time access the necessary resources and build the necessary skills to not just survive, but thrive in our communities.”