



Volunteers of America Residential Reentry Center

Re: Community reentry/Driving privileges House file 4571 Reintegration License

March 28, 2022

Hello, my name is Cheryl Turitto, I am the Employment Specialist /Program Coordinator at Volunteers of America Reentry Centers at both Lake Street and Roseville Facilities. I have worked in reentry for the past 12 years.

I believe that legal transportation is crucial to the success of the men and women that I work with that are coming out of incarceration. The men and women that I work with are typically at our facility for up to 8 months. From the time they arrive the majority do not have a drivers license. Their license has either expired, they have never driven legally, or they have fines. Most of these men and women come out seeking a new direction and real change in their lives beginning with getting their driver's license and getting a decent job. However, they are met with significant barriers to accomplishing the real change they so desire.

I just recently had an individual in my office that completed 6 years of incarceration. Tears were streaming down his face as he explained that he was about to lose his union job due to issues with obtaining his needed documents, his license was about to expire, and he would not be able to renew it without the needed documents. He needs his license to be able to drive to and from his work sites in construction. He was able to provide some documentation this last week to try and postpone the expiration of his license. I have not heard if the paperwork helped.

This is a story that is all too common for the men and women that I work with. When they have exhausted all that they can do, they start to make poor decisions. They may choose to drive un-licensed. When family is no longer willing or able to drive them, they turn to old friends to get around. They also start to lose the hope that they had for real change.

In order to have successful transition from incarceration back into community, and to give our men and women a real chance for change, I am in favor of the legislation and support of the Reintegration License Legislation House file 4571.

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