

 **09hr_SC-LEUA_sb0612_pt01**



Details:

(FORM UPDATED: 08/11/2010)

WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE ... PUBLIC HEARING - COMMITTEE RECORDS

2009-10

(session year)

Senate

(Assembly, Senate or Joint)

Committee on ... Labor, Elections, and Urban Affairs (SC-LEUA)

COMMITTEE NOTICES ...

- Committee Reports ... **CR**
- Executive Sessions ... **ES**
- Public Hearings ... **PH**

INFORMATION COLLECTED BY COMMITTEE FOR AND AGAINST PROPOSAL

- Appointments ... **Appt** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Clearinghouse Rules ... **CRule** (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
- Hearing Records ... bills and resolutions (w/Record of Comm. Proceedings)
(**ab** = Assembly Bill) (**ar** = Assembly Resolution) (**ajr** = Assembly Joint Resolution)
(**sb** = Senate Bill) (**sr** = Senate Resolution) (**sjr** = Senate Joint Resolution)
- Miscellaneous ... **Misc**

April 22, 2010

Failed to pass pursuant to Senate Joint Resolution 1.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'A. Plotkin', is written above a horizontal line.

Adam Plotkin
Committee Clerk



WISCONSIN'S BUSINESS VOICE SINCE 1911

TO: Senate Labor, Elections and Urban Affairs Committee

FROM: John Metcalf, Director, Human Resources Policy

DATE: April 8, 2010

RE: Opposition to SB 612

Background

Current law, subject to certain exceptions, prohibits discrimination in employment based on conviction record. Current law specifies, however, that it is not employment discrimination because of conviction record to refuse to employ an individual who has been convicted of a felony, misdemeanor, or other offense, the circumstances of which substantially relate to the circumstances of the particular job.

2009-2010 Session Legislation

This bill provides that employment discrimination because of conviction record includes requesting an applicant for employment, on an application form or otherwise, to supply information regarding any conviction record of the applicant, or otherwise inquiring into or considering the conviction record of an applicant for employment, **before the applicant has been selected for an interview** by the prospective employer.

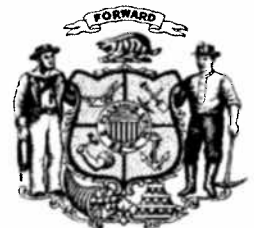
The bill, however, does not prohibit an employer from notifying applicants for employment that an individual with a particular conviction record may be disqualified by law or the employer's policies from employment in particular positions.

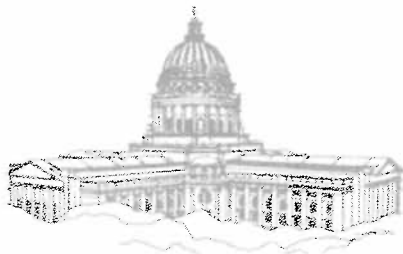
WMC Position - Oppose

This legislation would make the hiring process more complex for employers who must, as a matter of law, conduct thorough criminal background checks on potential employees. Further, for other employers who, as a best practice employment screen, conduct criminal background checks, this bill will add unnecessary delay, cost and complexity to the hiring process.



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





LENA C. TAYLOR

Wisconsin State Senator • 4th District

HERE TO SERVE YOU!

Testimony of Senator Lena C. Taylor

SB 612 – Ban the Box, prohibiting employment discrimination based on conviction
prior to selection for interview

Committee on Labor, Elections, & Urban Affairs

Thursday, April 08, 2010

Honorable Chairman Coggs and members of the committee:

Thank you for taking testimony today on SB 612 – the Ban the Box bill, which prohibits employment discrimination based on conviction prior to selection for interview. I am pleased to partner with Rep. Joe Parisi on this legislation that goes straight to the heart of one of the biggest re-entry issues for offenders – the opportunity of employment.

Attached to this testimony is a portion of a presentation by the Council of State Governments to the Committee on Justice Reinvestment Initiative Oversight on April 7, 2009. This slide shows the large quantity of persons under the supervision of community corrections that are unemployed, primarily because of their conviction record. There are programs and limited job opportunities for offenders but the major portion of employment is closed to these persons. Employment is not only a requirement for supervision, but also the single largest factor that helps an offender maintain successful reintegration. Keeping offenders employed saves Wisconsin taxpayers money due to lower recidivism and improved public welfare and safety.

To address this employment problem, Rep. Parisi and I have partnered with Wisconsin Community Services, to create this legislation. This bill clearly states that requiring information about conviction record or inquiring about that record prior to the time a person is selected for an interview is employment discrimination. The check box that is utilized on most business forms today, never allows a reentering offender the opportunity to explain the circumstances or their rehabilitation to date. However, this bill DOES NOT deny an employer from inquiring about conviction and discriminating on the basis of conviction once an applicant is scheduled for interview, or from notifying the person that it will be checked.

Employment is one of the most important aspects of successful reentry. I encourage this committee to carefully review this legislation and the impact it will have to foster successful reintegration and reduce recidivism which in turn saves Wisconsin taxpayers from growing incarceration costs.

Employment

Employment Status of Post-Release Supervision Population

Employed 1 Year
1%



Developing a Strategy

Annie E. Casey Foundation is supporting WI DOC in developing strategies for people in prison and returning to the community

WI DOC Community-Based Programs

Windows to Work

Partnership between WI DOC and Bay Area Workforce Investment Board serving 40 individuals/yr currently across three counties providing job prep in prison and job development in the community. Planning to expand to Milwaukee

Coordinating & Expanding Local Efforts

Numerous local non-profits and foundations developing or running employment programs either targeting people on community supervision or accessible to them.

Opportunity in Milwaukee to review target population and coordinate among programs

Community Corrections Employment Program

71 transitional job slots currently occupied; 46 work subsidies/OJT currently being used



LEVA Exec + Hearing

4/8/10

SB 102

EXEC

Kumbaya on SB172
no GOP, quick roll

HEARING

~~SB~~ Ronald Polacek

no one showed or registered

SB435

Kevin Kennedy

- has written testimony
- X - ? on retaining records in financially feasible way
 - paper printout + ballots retained
 - problem is space on memory card
 - cost prohibitive to retain data electronically

John Washburn

- no written testimony, but a lot of supporting material
- takes some shots at Kevin + GAB
- impossible to check election complaints
- goes through his "sub" section by section
- central count tabulation
- concern with a personal challenge that he filed
- wants election records defined as open records

①

SB 435 cont.

- John Washburn cont.

- thinks vendors are lying

- SC? on his "sub"

- disputed vendors claims

- SC? on votes shd be open records

- the totals shd be available

- SC? - alleging ballot box stuffing?

- not that stuffing happened, just a records retention issue

- Shane Falk

- ~~addresses~~ addresses Washburn's points

- 73% of state uses large optical scan machine

- cost prohibitive to remove & store

- still required to retain for 22 mos. after fed. election

- ballots only kept for 30 days.

- Assembly added amendment to address new equipment that utilizes flash drives

- keep 22 mo. retention under amendment if on new media

- Ch. 19 exempts products w/ code & other info that is proprietary + ensures security

- canvasses are retained for 10 years

- GAB tests voting equipment

- SC? on flash drive amendment

- AAI to AB 446 (?) explained

- GAB supports

(2)

80612

Lena Taylor

- has written testimony
- SC? on "ban the box"
 - not trying to give leg up, just remove disadvantage
 - let credentials speak to qualification for interview
- ~~~~~

Chris Ahmky

- no written, brief remarks

Gordon Leech

- no written testimony, has some supporting documents
- testifying for IRR @ State Bar
- WI Employer Relations Assn.
- existence of ~~convicted~~ conviction record bad enough, regardless of what for
 - SC? on lack of employable skills
 - bill doesn't enlarge law

Hans Simpson

- convicted felon
- doesn't want to be burden on state, wants to add to tax eds
- wants ability to tell story, can't do that without getting interview
- used to own & run a large international business

John Metcalf & Robert Schreiber

- John has written testimony
- gives brief background also
- Safe Place statute in WI law for current employees

SB 624 cont.

John McCauley + Robert Schweitzer cont.

- Robert has no written remarks
- on opposite side from Gardan Leech
- WI already offers more protection than other states
- ~~more~~

David Pifer

- has written testimony
- ad lib a bit
- doesn't prevent asking at interview
- provides chance for redemption
- ~~current~~ system is discriminatory
- arguments against are red herrings
 - SC? - fair to applicant w/ pile system on phone
 - act of picking up phone is sign of selection

SB 624

John Lehman

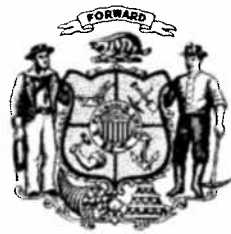
- has written testimony
 - SC? - just expansion
 - yes

Bruce Lindsay

- reads written testimony, but passes out bullet points
- termed as a simple legislative fix



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE



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Presented by the Wisconsin Government Accountability Board

as of Wednesday, April 07, 2010

2009-2010 legislative session
Legislative bills and resolutions

(search for another legislative bill or resolution at the bottom of this page)

Senate Bill 612

prohibiting consideration of any conviction record of an applicant for employment before the applicant has been selected for an interview. (FE)

TEXT
sponsors
LRB analysis

STATUS
committee actions and
votes
text of amendments

COST & HOURS
of lobbying efforts
directed at this
proposal

Organization		These organizations have reported lobbying on this proposal:	Place pointer on icon to display comments, click icon to display prior comments		
Profile	Interests		Date Notified	Position	Comments
●	●	Alliance of Wisconsin Retailers, LLC	3/22/2010	↓	
●	●	City of Milwaukee	4/1/2010	↔	
●	●	Wisconsin Manufacturers & Commerce	3/24/2010	↓	
●	●	Wisconsin Motor Carriers Association	4/6/2010	↓	
●	●	Wisconsin Restaurant Association	3/24/2010	↓	
●	●	Wisconsin Retail Council	4/8/2010	↓	

Select a legislative proposal and click "go"

House

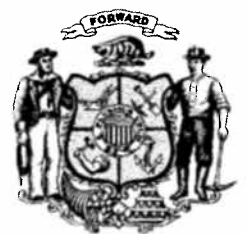
Proposal Type

Proposal Number (enter proposal number)

Legislative Session



WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





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Why can't convicted felons ever find work?



Asked by **pattyman** over 2 years ago, 67 answers.

Hello I live in California in a small town called Tehachapi and I'm a convicted Felon I was convicted of a Hit and run and drug charges and Retaing use of an access card with intent to comit fraud. the hit and run I can understand the Drug charges well...

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Questions

[Where can a robbery convicted felon in NY find work?](#)

[Where can a convicted felon find work in FL?](#)

[Can convicted felons find work in Florida?](#)

[Can anyone help a convicted felon find work?](#)

[I need to find work I am a convicted felon](#)

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they are what they are but the card one is a joke. Anyhow I was convicted and whent to prison for 19 months. I payed my debt to society and got out and off parole. Found a job and worked for 8 months till a background check got me fired cause I lied on the app, was the only way I could get a job. Now for two years I have been looking for work and being honest on my apps and never here from any employer. I have ben to college and even an aeronautical school have plenty of education but that doesnt seem to mean a thing. Recently I went to a company here in my town called Chemtool and the guy who hires was very nice and seemed like he wanted to hire, meso I filled out the application and I never heard from him again. Seems like a discrimination to me. But under the EOE they state nothing about Convictions, in other words that is the one thing that you can be discriminated against, not race, color, religion ect but felon convictions yes.

So I keep trying Last one was swift I have a class A licence and all my endorsements I can drive a missle across the United states. I can haul gas drive doubles but no one will hire me casue I have a hit and run. SO I thought I would try swift Transportaion filled out there little aplication was as honest as I could be , you have to. And nothin. At least call a guy back and tell him hes a no good criminal and that you dont want to hire him casue of whatever at least there would be some closer, that would be nice.

So here I am still no job and its been a little over 2 years, I survive buy living with my mother and selling stuff on ebay and a little welfare, Sad thing is welfare wont help me find a job casue I have a drug conviction another joke in society. I havent seen any drugs in 7 years but I have a drug conviction So I'm uneligable for CAIworks a program that helps someone find work that is on welfare. No wonder society is all screwed up and criminals keep going back to jail. give them jobs and there would be a lot less crime.

So what does a convicted felon do to get a job. I have to survive I cant live off my mother forever and nor do I want to. Very demining here it has been 5 years sice I payed my debt to society and I'm still being punished for it.

Question closed

Share this question

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```

it will display on your blog or site like this:

Why can't convicted felons ever find work?

Howtos

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Environment

How to study effectively for a test or exam.

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Answered by **baypharm** on Feb 19, 2008,

02:56PM

9 answers

We are actively seeking persons convicted of non violent felonies for a film we are making in hopes of changing popular opinion. Please visit our web site:

<http://www.kineticimagefilmgroup.com>

1 person thought this was helpful

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Discover What The Martial Artists And The Army Don't Want You To Know
www.CloseCombatTraining.com

Answered by **Ilewellyn** on Jun 28, 2007,

12:39PM

898 answers

You're right, the punishment isn't over when a person gets out of jail or prison. You're also right that that can create more problems since ex-cons might be tempted to turn to theft or robbery in an attempt to live if they can't find a job.

However, to be perfectly honest, I can understand why most employers would not want to hire an ex-con. Few people leave jail or prison completely rehabilitated. It's difficult to tell who will re-offend and who won't, so sometimes they just don't want to risk hiring the guy in the first place.

Do you have any skills? Often times people, around where I live anyway, who own things like smaller construction or painting companies will either hire ex-cons or won't even do a real

application process to begin with.

Answered by **hronetta** on Jul 23, 2007, 09:01AM

Tell me about it, I'm a woman, and I have lied everytime I get employment. Sometimes I just don't answer the question. There's been times that I have, and nothing. I have no parents, they passed away, it's just me, and it's been over 7 years since the 13 months I served in prison for forgery. It's a big joke, the government knows once you're released, you may come back, because you won't be able to support yourself. I've gotten apartment after apartment, because, like you said once they find out, it's over. I worked for a car dealership, and the General Manager knew my back ground, and he told everybody there, and started making little comments asking me if I like the police? I knew why he was saying it, but why was it necessary. What he didn't know is I dated a peace officer for 10 yrs, he took care of me while I was in prison, and he provided a car for me for 2 yrs when I came home, so people say things but they really don't know you. I thought to myself, how ignorant is he? But you pay for your crime for the rest of your life.

Answered by **czackery** on Aug 24, 2007, 12:58PM

Hi... I'm in Florida and I'm going through the same issue of not being able to find a job because of my record. I found a company called Expungement Assistance Services that can/will help you. Their website is: <http://www.removeit.org> You should check'em out.

Cedric

Answered by **ooh somebody stop me** on Sep 21, 2007, 10:10PM

You never really get rid of a felony even if you get your records expunged or the felony reduced. Lets not even talk about a pardon, those only work for crooked politicians. In this country the only way things change is through the law!! Yes through the very system that advocated putting you away physically for said time and than made you invisible to society once released. The sad thing is crime is big business and the big money generated by it is not from "criminal" activity per say, but by the long list of the different sectors of the economy that keep the wheels of justice cranking. So I don't think anyone is going to take on changing the status quo any time soon. It looks like we will continue to be invisible until a brave soul takes on the challenge to make a change. Any takers? I sometimes feel there is no hope for me to live a normal life in this country, yet I love it so much I can't imagine living anywhere else but reality hits home on a daily basis, I am a single mother of one child, how do I continue lying to my self that I can make it here and watch us slowing end up on the

streets. I just finished school thinking this would give me a leg up. It has not. There are many jobs already because of my gender that are closed to me (EOE) can kiss my @\$\$. And of course as a felon many more doors have closed before I even attempted to open them. Sometimes I feel like a wounded dog writhing in pain on the ground, yes it hurts, yes I take responsibility so Please master stop the trashing LET ME GET UP! For the love of god let me get up! And release me from this ball and chain.



Answered by [assweetaswine](#) on Oct 23, 2007, 10:51AM



[Click to see large size](#)

Well its the same in Louisiana also. I was arrested on sept. 26 and pleaded guilty on march 5 this year got probation and restitution, was allowed to keep my nurse aide license, but can't find a employer that will hire me, thought I had a break when on my back=ground check it says I have been arrested but not convicted but wth 6 cts forgedy and 6 cts conspiracy, and a letter from the DA stating yes she was arrested and we tried to charge her with this but she was not convicted of these charges, I still ca't find a job in any industry I have 3 kids and no help the employment office here is a joke the workers in there know less than I do And Honesty is not the best policy! Any body with real helpful advice for some one in La please feel free to submit!

Answered by [alcrumedy](#) on Nov 20, 2007, 11:45AM

to assweetaswine you r a beautiful woman who unfortunately is being dealt a dirthy hand , but you must stay strong. I'm in ny and I was convicted in 04, and senteced to 5yrs probation, I lost my job of 6yrs in june 07, and since then its been rough as hell, no one is wiling to hire me . I refuse to give up and I suggest you not give up either

Answered by [onasis](#) on Nov 27, 2007, 04:25PM

You know what it's such a shame because we want to do better, and be better people but how can we when our past is tatoood on us for life. I got 1 yr probation, for fraudelent credit of \$700.00 because it was over 500 its a felony. I don't do drugs, never got in trouble before and want so bad to prove that it was all a mistake and I the more I read I feel like just sticking my head in a oven and turning it on. It was christmas and I got screwd for my pay so I took the credit card, stupid I know. Now from what I read, I can't go to school, cause whats the point if no one will hire me, and I can't use my dynamite interviewing skills cause they will run a check, and I won't be able to get a house or an apartment. So they have there answers why people keep committing crimes. How can we

better ourselves if they won't allow us too? however, if I was on drugs or did drugs, then maybe I could of gotten a diversion. whatever

Answered by **onasis** on Nov 27, 2007, 04:26PM

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Answered by **panicrooster** on Nov 28, 2007,

02:44PM

8 answers

I'm in the same boat Pattyman. I now live with my mom and stepdad, very stressful, and I can't get a job to save my life. Or it seems that way at the moment. I have a class A CDL but was suspended by KS a couple months ago. I actually love driving the rigs but over time living in that rig nonstop sucks. I partly did it because it seemed neat but also because of my felonies, from a looong time ago, keep me from getting a good job. I'm considering applying for financial help but don't have a clue how to do it in VA. Even though I was tired of living in the rigs all the time, at least I made money and was doing good. I have to admit, that it's my own damn fault for getting my CDL suspended. I think unfairly, but I played a part and allowing. Now I'm trying to get a job installing cable/internet as a subcontractor. The cable companies won't hire me directly because of the felonies.

Answered by **pattyman** on Nov 29, 2007,

11:38PM



Yes it's very bad when you foul up. I still have my Class A CDL. but no trucking compaies will hire me because of the Hit and run on the record. I'm to high a risk for there insurance compaines. Since posting my plight, I have tried several different means of work mainly all self employment ventures and all have been a complete failure. Still living with mom but she is in her 70's now and

depends on me for a lot of stuff which is fine.

Just wish employers wouldnt be so hard nosed about a person with felonies. its been 5 years now since I got in trouble and would think there would be a statute of limitations.

One thing I have not seen yet is someone on youtube present the presidential candidates with the question about convicted felons being able to find work. I mean what president is going to implement some type of programs to help people with convictions find employment. I may present this on youtube presidential candidates questions and maybe they will present it to them I would like to here what they have to say, of course politicians will say anything to get to be president. Then after there, there they do what they want, so it probably wouldnt make any difference but worth a try just like anything else

How about changing that EOE (Equal oppurtunity for Employment) to read in there that they cannot discriminate against you for being a convicted felon. Well the new year is almost here going to try a employment work shop in January maybe I will get out of my rut.

To all of you out there with this plight I wish you all the best of luck in all your ventures and a merry Christmas and A happier New Year.

Answered by **panicrooster** on Nov 30, 2007,

07:40AM

8 answers

One thing for sure is that our government doesn't care about us. I do know the prison system is a very lucrative business but my god! I sometimes feel like I've been forgotten by the world. When I pop up to apply for a job, they just remind me I don't matter. Can be pretty disheartening. My convictions were in 1992 and I'm still turned down for jobs due to having felonies. what the f*ck? Pattyman, before too long you will be able to join a trucking company. Each has their own hiring rules and time frames, but I know some are pretty easy going. Swift would be a good starting point, I started there and not bad, just find out exactly how many years have to pass. They hire felons. USA Trucking maybe one of the easiest to join. I know drivers with major accidents and lists of serious tickets and they were the only company that would hire them. I've heard bad things about them, but I've heard bad about all companies. You want to talk to them. Just a thought.

Well, coming this next week I have an interview for a cable company to see if they will let me sub-contract piecework for them on Monday and calling back a car dealership today, to set up an interview for next week I'm guessing. Paid training and odds are don't care about my record. PM, I get my cdl reinstated September 5th 2008, but now I've got a bad smear on my driving record. I guess I might as well explain it. I got caught or woke up, more like, by a trooper in a rest area. He told me I can't park there any longer and they were doing random dot inspections. My log book wasn't updated but I do so after getting up usually and before driving. So he has me do all the lights, etc. Well, I had drank beer that night and when he had me sit in the cruiser to write me up tickets he smelled it. Then looked in my cooler and found beer. He gave breathalyzer and I had .043. Since the truck was running (usually was all the time) and you're not suppose to drink in a commercial vehicle, or have beer in it, they have a one year administrative suspension.

So, I lost my job, or had to quit basically, and now stuck with nothing and having problems getting anything. I'm not sure exactly why, but it seems harder each time I go through this. I really do feel all of your frustrations and sympathize. I've been on this road for 15 years. Even not getting in trouble ever again except one DUI 13 years ago, I'm labeled for life. I'm not saying I condone robbing a bank, but let's say if someone did.. I understand.

Answered by [zory_armand_girl08](#) on Feb 05, 2008, 06:20PM

I understand perfectly. I'm a 26 year old female. I have an aggravated assault charge that happened in 2002 of November. I wasn't convicted until May of 2006 because the state had picked my case up. What employers fail to realize is what was the cause of the charge. I was being physically abused by my ex-boyfriend. To avoid being beaten and strangled to death I grabbed the nearest object in arms reach. I struck him across the head several times to get away. Mind you he's was athletically muscular built, 6'0, 210lbs. I was and still is 5'10, 153lbs, athletically built. What was I suppose to do in that situation? Let him beat and strangle me to death? or fight for my life? Well it caused me to go to jail for 3days, lose my home, 4yrs probation and I had to serve 6months of anger management classes. I can't get a good paying job because I have a criminal background. It's not fair to me because they won't even interview to ask about the reason for the charge. I have to settle for less and I can't. I'm going to school hoping it would help by the time I graduate and get off of probation. Employers look at you and wonder if you'll attack another employee. But yet it states on applications that the conviction will not necessarily keep you getting hired. Yeah right! So trust me I understand. It is extremely unfair. Felons get out trying to do what's right in the eyes of God and society. The more they try, the more they get turned down, and forced back into the life of crime! All they can say is...AT LEAST I TRIED!

Answered by [aflowers7166](#) on Feb 13, 2008, 02:43PM

I'm sorry, but I don't understand. I am a 27 year old male who is also a convicted felon. I have been clean from drugs for 1 year and things couldn't be better. It's all about how you talk to people. I mean, you say that you are educated, but take a minute and read back through your story. There are so many misspellings, it's as though a third-grader wrote it! You should consider going back to school to educate yourself further. This will also give you the opportunity to communicate with others who are making progress in their lives. Another suggestion is to regularly attend AA meetings. I have found that there are many successful people in the program who are willing to help out. You have to realize that, as convicted felons, we are automatically outcast from certain positions in life. Unfortunately, this is fair discrimination. But once we get our foot in the door, as long as we do what we are supposed to and show up everyday, hard work cannot be denied. Good luck with things, and keep your head up.

Answered by **Inianouris** on Feb 19, 2008,
02:52PM

Not so. I have a college degree in pharmacy but cannot find work. I am a convicted felon because of Ebay. I sold a computer to a guy who paid me with a counterfeit cashier's check. The police arrested me and told me I would go to prison for 13 years, if I took the plea I would get 3 year probation. You do the math. I took the plea because I was scared and could not afford F. Lee Bailey to get the charge thrown out. Every application asks if you have ever been convicted of a crime or felony. Even Wendy's won't hire felons anymore. I am able to keep my state license but no employers will hire me. I am engaged to be married to a girl who knows the truth about the U.S. Government and the corrupt legal system. But if I cannot ever find work, how can I hope to have a good marriage and raise a family. We want children after we're married. Laws need to be changed. In Florida, the public lumps you in with child molesters, sex predators, and rapists. When I tell a prospective employer what happened, they just look at me in disbelief and say that is so unbelievable. But they still don't believe me. They think I am hiding more parts of it. Where will it all end?

Answered by **Jersey ed1981** on Feb 27, 2008,
05:22PM

no one wants to give you work because they need poeple like us to work low paying jobs to keep the rich rich.I to am a felon with a class a cdl that dont mater your best bet is to try to save some money an get your own truck and your dot# will be like your ss# or finn a owner opp who needs a driver. truth is were doom:one fu*k and thats it.but kip your head up thay cant danie us foe ever. (Jersey Ed)

Answered by **lasvegasrea** on Mar 01, 2008,
01:30PM

Because society won't give them a chance. I have a son who 7 years ago pled to recvg stolen property, joke (he was in the car) theft (joke), he was waiting outside for his friend to come out of the store. His friend got prison, my son got probation. He violated his probation so they figured since he drank and smoked weed, they put him in a correctional rehabilitation facility. He did 10 months. He got out free and clear. Ever since then he has had only menial jobs in fast food. He knows how to work in fast food, warehouse and any other job that can come his way. The only thing is that he doesn't have a license. They suspended them. He can now get them back, but as far as finding a decent job, no chance. He worked for this temp agency that found jobs for convicted felons, they put him in the freezer to work. A job that no one else would want. Then they were done with him. Now you see, society doesn't want felons to work because if they all could get jobs, then there would be nothing for the govt and society to complain about, the system would be too perfect. I wish that I could start a company that could help get felons a job because I would not have a problem helping people (felons/ex cons) themselves get that 2nd chance that they so deserve since noone in society

or the govt would help them
(Las Vegas REA)

Answered by **James53** on Mar 26, 2008,

08:18PM

21 answers

Well, I hate to be the bearer of bad news to all of you but I am still dealing with this issue after 25 years after I was convicted of possession of stolen property, while I was doing my job driving a wrecker. Yes, I said 25 years ago. I have applied for jobs over the years and I've tried lying on the applications and also telling the truth. It doesn't seem to matter either way. They will find out sooner or later.

To add insult to my injury I am 55 years old and who wants to hire an old fart white guy with gray hair plus the LARGE fact that I am a felon. Just because it was 25 years ago does not matter. For some reason our society has become severe hypocrites. You and I both know there are twice as many people that didn't get caught as the ones that did. I'm sure they are some of our biggest enemies.

Folks there is no good reason to cry about our plight. We just have to move forward and do whatever we can to make a living for ourselves. Until the laws are changed and we get the right to work we will live on the edge of society. So much for the BAD news.

Now for the GOOD news. You might be wondering how this guy has been able to make a living and raise a family for the past 2 and half decades? Well I owe it in great part to a loving and supportive wife who has given up much of her own freedom to help me through this all. We've been able to raise three well adjusted kids who have all graduated from college and have jobs of their own. What can I say? I have been blessed with people who have heard my story and have been willing to give me a chance. But most of all I've been blessed to with a faith that has carried me through this.

I know I might lose more of you at this point, but if you believe in the God of the Bible you must learn to trust Him fully with your life. Even I had not had to deal with my felony all these years I still would have needed a guide to lead me through the hard times of life. There are many other hard things to deal with in life and without a guide we will certainly lose our way and get lost.

Hopefully something I've said here will encourage you guys and ladies out there that struggle with each new day. There is hope. Please search for it and you will find it. It will bring you peace, happiness and eventually joy.

I also realized about 10 years ago that the only way I could possibly make it financially was to start my own business. And I know that I will loose some of you here because you will say things like I have no money to start a business or I just don't know how to go about being in business for myself.

Well let me tell you I didn't either. But I had dreams and needs and desires that needed to be met. There is a quote from long ago that says necessity is the mother of invention. I have found that to be true. If you need and want it bad enough you will learn whatever you need to learn to make things happen.

Answered by [faxi](#) on Mar 27, 2008,
11:12AM
[6 answers](#)

Glad this is here, I am getting ready to be criminally found guilty and I was wondering if anyone here has tried to get to a felon supported school, for whatever, engineering, motorcycle mechanics and has seen it work all the way through? I just followed other information point and went through the process of information and that is where it lead me.



Answered by [funadvice](#) on Apr 12, 2008,
03:30PM
[52122 answers](#)

Recently I've come across several ex-offenders who are unable to get a job to feed their families. I know for a fact that during sentencing the state and federal government fail to advise you that your doing more than your time for your crime. I'm not talking about probation either, what I'm talking about is not being given a second chance when you've paid your debt to society. Not only that in the state of California, los angeles county, the federal government, which means in the United States period, those who have been convicted of a drug related crime will not qualify for food stamps. It's bad enough you cant find a job, and several of us are first offenders. So you don't get food stamps, and to top it off you still get the cash aide. So their hoping to starve you into taking your money and doing or selling drugs, which is unfortunately happening creating re-offences. What would you do if your children were starving, or yourself? No place to live because now most building management companies are holding your criminal history against you!

??? SO TO GET TO MY QUESTION ??? WHO SO I HAND THE SUBPEONA TO WHEN I SUE THE FEDERAL AND STATE GOVERNMENT FOR FAILURE TO ADVISE ME OF THE ADDITIONAL TERMS AND CONDITIONS OF MY PUNISHMENT THAT OPRESS ME? THIS IS STRESSFUL, MENTALLY AND PHYSICALLY, THIS IS CALLED PUNITIVE DAMAGES... GUESS WHAT THEY WILL SAY, WELL YOU SHOULD KNOW THE LAW OR PAY AN ATTORNEY \$5,000 +.

Brothas and Sistas is here to help in any area we can, and if we cant we will refer you to someone who can! [Fun mail me](#)

Answered by **troyprouty** on May 10, 2008,

11:50AM

10 answers

I'm going to attempt to put together a non-profit called workforce felons. If I can persuade certain groups like the ACLU to back this, and work one State at a time to open the doors through the probation offices in each State, than we can make an impact on seeing this as serious problem, and possibly get federal funding from pressure.

1 out of 10 people in the U.S. are either in jail, on probation or in prison. We have more people in prison than the whole continent of Europe.

I have brought this problem to the Gov of Oregon. Having fallen victim for my past, I realized I needed to take steps. You can't get places to rent, turned away from jobs, and an un-forgiven society (until it happens to them), when in reality more laws are being created to make crimes happen more. And some laws (described below) are being reduced to create more crime. It is one reason the middle class is being reduced and poverty increased. Need I say the wealthy making the most money they ever have made.

Please remember that in times of recession things happen like this. It gives business an opportunity to exploit the workers, through old law restrictions that are abolished. Have you noticed in some states they never asked about past convictions, than it was have you committed a crime in the last 7 years, than it became in the last 3 years, and now any crime at any time. This is because the federal government had money given to them, to vote in favor of abolishing those laws, and our government gave our rights away to corporations that stated (they have a right to know).

Since they (companies) have more money to spend, because income levels paid out is less- less insurance benefits, more temp jobs to help reduce cost, production moved over sea's, more people coming into the country (creating more people for fewer jobs which keeps driving down the price of income for the middle and lower class population, along with a huge number of people with criminal records to help this cause. They (companies) can spend thousands of dollars to help them more within the political process of government, such abolishing the laws like the 7 years, 3 years etc.

So how to fix the problem. Don't give up. Write and keep writing – Write to every Government official you can, this includes probation offices, Senators, Gov's, etc.. People not even in your State. Call papers, groups like ACLU, NAACP etc.. Keep writing, when they don't respond, show up at the offices, EVEN keep writing when they respond. Run an ad in the paper (If you are a person with a felony and are having a hard time getting a job and want to do something about it, please call 000-00-0000) Get a group established to protest at the capital of your State and call the media for the event. Make people aware.

ASK this question (If people can't get a place to live, or a job, what are they going to do?) start

initiatives and call NPR (National Public Radio) to talk about the initiative, let people call into the radio show to talk, I think you will find a variety of interesting opinions regarding this matter. WHAT EVER you do – Refuse to give in – Don't let society beat you..

Troy Prouty

Pages: 1 2 3 4 »

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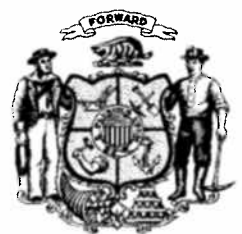
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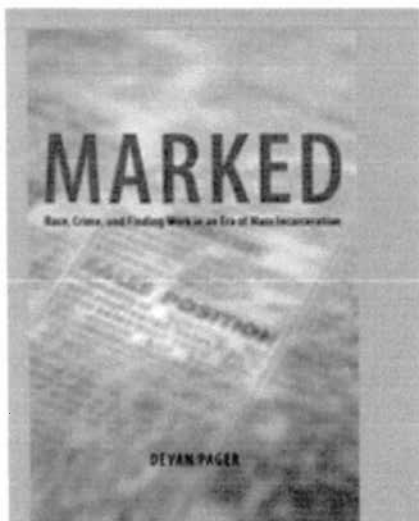
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WISCONSIN STATE LEGISLATURE





"In this elegant and powerful book, Devah Pager demonstrates that the stigma of incarceration significantly diminishes the employment prospects of those 'marked' with a criminal record. She shows convincingly that the ill-effects of imprisonment on work opportunities for black men are especially severe. Her rigorous quantitative analysis is guided by a sophisticated understanding of social theory. This book is an indispensable resource for anyone who wants to understand the implications of America's current policy of mass incarceration."—
Glenn C. Loury, Brown University

An excerpt from

Marked

Race, Crime, and Finding Work
in an Era of Mass Incarceration
Devah Pager

Introduction

At the start of the 1970s, incarceration appeared to be a practice in decline. Criticized for its overuse and detrimental effects, practitioners and reformers looked to community-based alternatives as a more promising strategy for managing criminal offenders. A 1967 report published by the President's Commission on Law Enforcement and Administration of Justice concluded: "Life in many institutions is at best barren and futile, at worst unspeakably brutal and degrading. The conditions in which [prisoners] live are the poorest possible preparation for their successful reentry into society, and often merely reinforces in them a pattern of manipulation or destructiveness." The commission's primary recommendation involved developing "more extensive community programs providing special, intensive treatment as an alternative to institutionalization for both juvenile and adult offenders." Echoing this sentiment, a 1973 report by the National Advisory Commission on Criminal Justice Standards and Goals took a strong stand against the use of incarceration. "The prison, the reformatory, and the jail have achieved only a shocking record of failure. There is overwhelming evidence that these institutions create crime rather than prevent it." The commission firmly recommended that "no new institutions for adults should be built and existing institutions for juveniles should be closed." Following what appeared to be the current of the time, historian David Rothman in 1971 confidently proclaimed, "We have been gradually escaping from institutional responses and one can foresee the period when incarceration will be used still more rarely than it is today."

Quite opposite to the predictions of the time, incarceration began a steady ascent, with prison populations expanding sevenfold over the next three decades. Today the United States boasts the highest rate of incarceration in the world, with more than two million individuals currently behind bars. Characterized by a rejection of the ideals of rehabilitation and an emphasis on "tough on crime" policies, the practice of punishment over the past thirty years has taken a radically different turn from earlier periods in history. Reflecting the stark shift in orientation, the U.S. Department of Justice released a report in 1992 stating "there is no better way to reduce crime than to identify, target, and incapacitate those hardened criminals who commit staggering numbers of violent crimes whenever they are on the streets." Far removed from earlier calls for decarceration and

community supervision, recent crime policy has emphasized containment and harsh punishment as a primary strategy of crime control.

The Revolving Door

Since the wave of tough on crime rhetoric spread throughout the nation in the early 1970s, the dominant concern of crime policy has been getting criminals off the streets. Surprisingly little thought, however, has gone into developing a longer-term strategy for coping with criminal offenders. With more than 95 percent of those incarcerated eventually released, the problems of offender management do not end at the prison walls. According to one estimate, there are currently more than twelve million ex-felons in the United States, representing roughly 9 percent of the male working-age population. The yearly influx of returning inmates is double the current number of legal immigrants entering the United States from Mexico, Central America, and South America combined.

Despite the vast numbers of inmates leaving prison each year, little provision has been made for their release; as a result, many do not remain out for long. Of those recently released, nearly two-thirds will be charged with new crimes, and more than 40 percent will return to prison within three years. In fact, the revolving door of the prison has now become its own source of growth, with the faces of former inmates increasingly represented among annual admissions to prison. By the end of the 1990s, more than a third of those entering state prison had been there before.

The revolving door of the prison is fueled, in part, by the social contexts in which crime flourishes. Poor neighborhoods, limited opportunities, broken families, and overburdened schools each contribute to the onset of criminal activity among youth and its persistence into early adulthood. But even beyond these contributing factors, evidence suggests that experience with the criminal justice system in itself has adverse consequences for long-term outcomes. In particular, incarceration is associated with limited future employment opportunities and earnings potential, which themselves are among the strongest predictors of desistance from crime. Given the immense barriers to successful reentry, it is little wonder that such a high proportion of those released from prison quickly make their way back through the prison's revolving door.

The Criminalization of Young Black Men

As the cycle of incarceration and release continues, an ever greater number of young men face prison as an expected marker of adulthood. But the expansive reach of the criminal justice system has not affected all groups equally. More than any other group, African Americans have felt the impact of the prison boom, comprising more

than 40 percent of the current prison population while making up just 12 percent of the U.S. population. At any given time, roughly 12 percent of all young black men between the ages of twenty-five and twenty-nine are behind bars, compared to less than 2 percent of white men in the same age group; roughly a third are under criminal justice supervision. Over the course of a lifetime, nearly one in three young black men--and well over half of young black high school dropouts--will spend some time in prison. According to these estimates, young black men are more likely to go to prison than to attend college, serve in the military, or, in the case of high school dropouts, be in the labor market. Prison is no longer a rare or extreme event among our nation's most marginalized groups. Rather it has now become a normal and anticipated marker in the transition to adulthood.

There is reason to believe that the consequences of these trends extend well beyond the prison walls, with widespread assumptions about the criminal tendencies among blacks affecting far more than those actually engaged in crime. Blacks in this country have long been regarded with suspicion and fear; but unlike progressive trends in other racial attitudes, associations between race and crime have changed little in recent years. Survey respondents consistently rate blacks as more prone to violence than any other American racial or ethnic group, with the stereotype of aggressiveness and violence most frequently endorsed in ratings of African Americans. The stereotype of blacks as criminals is deeply embedded in the collective consciousness of white Americans, irrespective of the perceiver's level of prejudice or personal beliefs.

While it would be impossible to trace the source of contemporary racial stereotypes to any one factor, the disproportionate growth of the criminal justice system in the lives of young black men--and the corresponding media coverage of this phenomenon, which presents an even more skewed representation--has likely played an important role. Experimental research shows that exposure to news coverage of a violent incident committed by a black perpetrator not only increases punitive attitudes about crime but further increases negative attitudes about blacks generally. The more exposure we have to images of blacks in custody or behind bars, the stronger our expectations become regarding the race of assailants or the criminal tendencies of black strangers.

The consequences of mass incarceration then may extend far beyond the costs to the individual bodies behind bars, and to the families that are disrupted or the communities whose residents cycle in and out. The criminal justice system may itself legitimate and reinforce deeply embedded racial stereotypes, contributing to the persistent chasm in this society between black and white.

The Credentialing of Stigma

The phenomenon of mass incarceration has filtered into the public consciousness through cycles of media coverage and political debates. But a more lasting source of information detailing the scope and reach of the criminal justice system is generated internally by state courts and departments of corrections. For each individual processed through the criminal justice system, police records, court documents, and corrections databases detail dates of arrest, charges, conviction, and terms of incarceration. Most states make these records publicly available, often through on-line repositories, accessible to employers, landlords, creditors, and other interested parties. With increasing numbers of occupations, public services, and other social goods becoming off-limits to ex-offenders, these records can be used as the official basis for eligibility determination or exclusion. The state in this way serves as a credentialing institution, providing official and public certification of those among us who have been convicted of wrongdoing. The "credential" of a criminal record, like educational or professional credentials, constitutes a formal and enduring classification of social status, which can be used to regulate access and opportunity across numerous social, economic, and political domains.

Within the employment domain, the criminal credential has indeed become a salient marker for employers, with increasing numbers using background checks to screen out undesirable applicants. The majority of employers claim that they would not knowingly hire an applicant with a criminal background. These employers appear less concerned about specific information conveyed by a criminal conviction and its bearing on a particular job, but rather view this credential as an indicator of general employability or trustworthiness. Well beyond the single incident at its origin, the credential comes to stand for a broader internal disposition.

The power of the credential lies in its recognition as an official and legitimate means of evaluating and classifying individuals. The negative credential of a criminal record represents one such tool, offering formal certification of the offenders among us and official notice of those demographic groups most commonly implicated. To understand fully the impact of this negative credential, however, we must rely on more than speculation as to when and how these official labels are invoked as the basis for enabling or denying opportunity. Because credentials are often highly correlated with other indicators of social status or stigma (e.g., race, gender, class), we must examine their direct and independent impact. In addition, credentials may affect certain groups differently than others, with the official marker of criminality carrying more or less stigma depending on the race of its bearer. As increasing numbers of young men are marked by their contact with the criminal justice system, it becomes a critical priority to understand the costs and consequences of this now prevalent form of negative credential.

What Do We Know about the Consequences of Incarceration?

Despite the vast political and financial resources that have been mobilized toward prison expansion, very little systematic attention has been focused on the potential problems posed by the large and increasing number of inmates being released each year. A snapshot of ex-offenders one year after release reveals a rocky path of reintegration, with rates of joblessness in excess of 75 percent and rates of rearrest close to 45 percent. But one simple question remains unanswered: Are the employment problems of ex-offenders caused by their offender status, or does this population simply comprise a group of individuals who were never very successful at mainstream involvement in the first place? This question is important, for its answer points to one of two very different sets of policy recommendations. To the extent that the problems of prisoner reentry reflect the challenges of a population poorly equipped for conventional society, our policies would be best targeted toward some combination of treatment, training, and, at the extreme, containment. If, on the other hand, the problems of prisoner reentry are to some degree caused by contact with the criminal justice system itself, then a closer examination of the (unintended) consequences of America's war on crime may be warranted. Establishing the nature of the relationship between incarceration and subsequent outcomes, then, is critical to developing strategies best suited to address this rapidly expanding ex-offender population.

In an attempt to resolve the substantive and methodological questions surrounding the consequences of incarceration, this book provides both an experimental and an observational approach to studying the barriers to employment for individuals with criminal records. The first stage observes the experiences of black and white job seekers with criminal records in comparison to equally qualified nonoffenders. In the second stage, I turn to the perspectives of employers in order to better understand the concerns that underlie their hiring decisions. Overall, this study represents an accounting of trends that have gone largely unnoticed or underappreciated by academics, policy makers, and the general public. After thirty years of prison expansion, only recently has broad attention turned to the problems of prisoner reentry in an era of mass incarceration. By studying the ways in which the mark of a criminal record shapes and constrains subsequent employment opportunities, this book sheds light on a powerful, emergent mechanism of labor market stratification. Further, this analysis recognizes that an investigation of incarceration in the contemporary United States would be inadequate without careful attention to the dynamics of race. As described earlier, there is a strong link between race and crime, both real and perceived, and yet the implications of this relationship remain poorly understood. This study takes a hard look at the labor market experiences of young black men, both with and without criminal pasts. In doing so, we gain a close-up view of the powerful role race continues to play in shaping the labor market opportunities available to young men. The United States remains sharply divided along color

lines. Understanding the mechanisms that perpetuate these divisions represents a crucial step toward their resolution.

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