



**CITY OF SAN ANTONIO
OFFICE OF THE CITY COUNCIL
COUNCIL CONSIDERATION REQUEST**

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TO: Mayor & City Council

FROM: Councilman Rey Saldaña, District 4

COPIES TO: Sheryl Sculley, City Manager; Leticia Vacek, City Clerk; Martha G. Sepeda, Acting City Attorney; John Peterek, Assistant to the City Manager; Christopher Callanan, Assistant to City Council

SUBJECT: Fair-Chance Hiring

DATE: October 17, 2016

Issue Proposed for Consideration

I ask for your support for the inclusion of the following item on the agenda of the earliest available meeting of the Governance Committee:

Directing staff to create a "Fair-Chance Hiring Ordinance" that would remove questions about conviction history from employment applications and allow all job seekers a fair chance to compete for jobs. This change allows employers to judge applicants on their qualifications first, without the stigma of a record. This ordinance should work to eliminate the questions for city employment, within the guidelines of state and federal requirements, and explore opportunities to encourage and support private employer participation in the city.

Brief Background

There are an estimated 70 million U.S. adults with arrests or convictions, many of whom are turned away from jobs despite their skills and qualifications. The "box" on a job application is a barrier to employment and it has a chilling effect that discourages people from applying.

According to the National Employment Law Project (NELP) a conviction record reduces the likelihood of a job callback or offer by nearly 50%. The consequence is the creation of barriers to jobs, hindrance to economic growth and it's simply bad for business. NELP research finds that the reduced output of goods and services of people with felonies and prison records is estimated at \$78 to \$87 billion in losses to the nation's economy in one year. Removing the stigma of a record in the initial hiring process allows people to work and increase their tax contributions, boosts sales tax, and saves money by keeping people out of the criminal justice system. Major employers such as Starbucks, Facebook, Koch Industries, Target and Walmart have employed Fair-Chance hiring practices because it makes sense. In addition, 24 states have also embraced Fair-Chance hiring practices, with nine extending it to private employers.

Finding employment is often a challenge for those re-entering our community after serving their time or carrying a criminal record. When individuals find a job, it can lower the likelihood of recidivism. Likewise, unemployment can be a significant factor for someone re-offending. Applicants with a criminal record should be assessed on their qualifications instead of mistakes for which they have already paid their dues.

At last count, over 100 cities and counties had adopted the policy. A Fair-Chance Hiring Ordinance will allow San Antonio to join the list of cities, counties, states, and businesses that are looking to remove unjust barriers to employment.

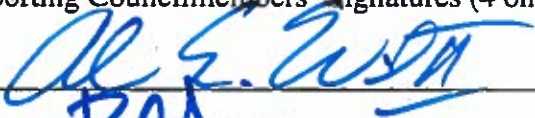
Submitted for Council consideration
by:


Councilman Rey Saldana, District 4

Supporting Councilmembers' Signatures (4 only)

District No.

1.





2.





3.





4.



