

HB 460
Proponent Testimony
Ohio House Criminal Justice Committee

John Rush, owner of Clean Turn, 180 Demo, Third Way Coffee House, and Rush Real Estate Holdings
jrush@cleanturn.com

Good afternoon Chairwoman Abrams, Ranking Minority Member Brown and the other members of the House Criminal Justice Committee. My name is John Rush and I am the Founder and CEO of CleanTurn, Third Way Coffee House, 180 Demo, and Rush Real Estate Holdings here in Columbus, Ohio on the West side. After serving as a Sergeant in the Marine Corps, I devoted my career to building small businesses. These small businesses have trained and employed over 5,000 individuals who have faced multiple barriers to employment, mainly due to their criminal records. I have five graduate degrees in Urban Studies, Theology, Philosophy, History, Nonprofit Management and an MBA from Kellogg School of Management at Northwestern. I understand the value of a well-trained workforce and believe that there is an entire section of people who are prohibited from entering the workforce.

HB 460 is a great way to allow some of these individuals who are not employed to their potential, to reenter the workforce after they have paid any restitution owed and waited the time period necessary for their crime.

I support HB 460 because the process to seal records is cumbersome and cost prohibitive. Each court has its own sealing process along with their own fee. This becomes extra burdensome to individuals who do not have the education necessary nor the ability to pay for a lawyer who could assist them.

I have hired thousands of people with criminal records and have found them to be some of the most loyal and hardworking people I have ever met. My industry allows for me to hire these folks without having their record sealed. However, many businesses are prohibited from hiring these same individuals due to insurance and bonding restrictions, and making the pathway to employment easier would give business owners more confidence that this is worth their investment. Removing barriers is key for the individuals seeking employment as well as the businesses hoping to offer it.

Finally, I would be remiss if I didn't speak to redemption and my spiritual belief that we all deserve a chance to live a full life after mistakes. My personal life is a testimony that people can and do change; without the opportunity to prove this though, it is easy to believe that our mistakes are all that define us. I am grateful for the times I have been offered a second chance, a feeling almost everyone can relate to, which is why I feel called to help facilitate second chances for the people I hire.

Thank you for your time and I would be happy to answer any questions.