



Chairman Lang  
Senate Building  
1 Capitol Square  
Ground Floor 048  
Columbus, Ohio 43215

February 23, 2024

Dear Senator Lang,

I am writing on behalf of OCCA, to offer proponent testimony in favor of Senate Bill 198 which seeks to improve the current process of providing driver's licenses and state identification for persons released from Ohio's prisons. The OCCA, comprised of non-profit residential community corrections agencies, supports these efforts which will help with workforce while also successfully integrating people with justice involvement as productive, tax paying citizens. As cited in your December 12th sponsor testimony, it is well documented that employment is an important factor in reducing recidivism and re-offending.<sup>1</sup>

Ohio's halfway house and community-based correctional facility residents accept responsibility for their actions and endeavor to lead productive lives as they annually provide almost 290,000 hours of community service while paying over \$1 million in taxes, court fines, restitution, and child support while they are in our facilities. In order to successfully complete our programs, gainful employment is required. Our Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction-licensed and Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services-certified agencies provide additional supports that include behavioral health assessment and counseling, anger management and cognitive behavioral therapy.

We have found that state identification or a driver's license are invaluable tools in getting someone legitimate work. Frequently, our clients are transported to our facilities without state identification and it is often an arduous task to get documentation. We are hopeful that the proposed process of DRC applying directly to the Ohio Bureau of Motor Vehicles nine months prior to release will be more efficient.

We applaud the sponsors on also requiring birth certificates, social security cards, work or vocational records, and documentation of a practice interview being forwarded by DRC. These design improvements have the potential to strengthen our economic development for both businesses **and** citizens who are being given a second chance.

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David Stillwagon, President  
Lusanne Green, Executive Director

Alvis - Columbus, Dayton,  
Chillicothe

Community Assessment & Treatment  
Services, Inc. - Cleveland

Community Corrections Association, Inc -  
Youngstown

Community Correctional Center,  
Talbert House -Lebanon

Community Restoration Centers of Stark  
County, Inc. - Canton

Community Transition Center - Lancaster

CROSSWAEH CBCF, Oriana House, Inc. -  
Tiffin

Judge Nancy R. McDonnell CBCF,  
Oriana House, Inc. - Cleveland

Mahoning County CBCF, Community  
Corrections Association, Inc. -  
Youngstown

Ohio Link Corrections & Treatment, Inc. -  
Lima & Toledo

Oriana House, Inc. - Akron, Cleveland,  
Marietta, Sandusky

Summit County CBCF Oriana House, Inc. -  
Akron

Talbert House - Cincinnati

The Salvation Army Harbor Light -  
Cleveland

Turtle Creek, Talbert House - Lebanon

Volunteers of America Ohio & Indiana -  
Cincinnati, Dayton, Mansfield, Toledo

Please reach out to us if we can be helpful to you on Senate Bill 198 or if you have interest in seeing one of our facilities. Thank you for your leadership on this issue! Questions may be directed to Lusanne Green via email at [Lgreen@OCCAonline.org](mailto:Lgreen@OCCAonline.org) or Kelsey Woolard at Governmental Policy Group via voice (614) 461-9335 or email at [KWoolard@GPGRHR.com](mailto:KWoolard@GPGRHR.com)

Respectfully,



David J. Stillwagon

OCCA President

Community Corrections Association, Inc.- Chief Executive Officer

<sup>1</sup>. Brookings Institute: <https://www.brookings.edu/articles/a-better-path-forward-for-criminal-justice-training-and-employment-for-correctional-populations/>

And Urban Institute: <https://www.urban.org/sites/default/files/publication/32106/411778-Employment-after-Prison-A-Longitudinal-Study-of-Releasees-in-Three-States.PDF> last visited 2/23/24.