

2nd House District

Franklin County

Columbus Office

Vern Riffe Center

77 S. High Street

10th Floor

Columbus, Ohio  
43215-6111

(614) 466-8010



Latyna M. Humphrey  
State Representative

Ohio's Second House District

Committees

Correctional Institution  
Inspection Committee  
(Secretary)  
Government Oversight  
(Ranking Member)  
Energy  
Community  
Revitalization  
Public Safety

Good afternoon, Chairman Ghanbari, Vice Chair Dean, Ranking Member Upchurch, and members of the Small Business Committee: Thank you for the opportunity to provide sponsor testimony on **House Bill 268**.

House Bill 268 proposes a modest yet meaningful change to Ohio law regarding the **Certificate of Qualification for Employment (CQE)**—bringing it into alignment with the recently enacted **Certificate of Qualification for Housing (CQH)**, legislation I was proud to champion alongside the Honorable Representative Bill Seitz in the last General Assembly.

Let me begin with a brief explanation of the CQE: Pls note that the Certificate of Qualification for Employment is available to individuals with prior convictions who submit a formal application. CQE offers relief from certain mandatory legal restrictions that would otherwise automatically disqualify someone from employment or occupational licensing due to their criminal record. As part of the process, applicants must explain how the certificate would aid their rehabilitation and employment prospects.

If granted, the CQE may be presented to potential employers—who are then required to consider the applicant fairly. **Importantly, if an employer chooses to hire someone with a CQE, they are protected from tort liability related to claims of negligent hiring.** (A CQE does not guarantee the job — it allows, but does **not** require, employer to let you into this field of employment.)

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Currently, individuals with a felony conviction must complete up to five years of **Community Control Sanctions** and then wait an additional year before they are eligible to apply for a CQE. **House Bill 268 would revise that timeline**, allowing individuals to apply for a CQE **one year after their release from incarceration**, rather than waiting until one year after completing Community Control Sanctions—which can extend up to five years.

This change **does not** affect the process for misdemeanor convictions: individuals would still be eligible to apply six months after completing Community Control and any other sanctions. This adjustment is both practical and necessary. It allows individuals to reenter the workforce sooner, aiding their reintegration and reducing barriers to self-sufficiency. It also aligns with the intent behind CQH—creating consistency across housing and employment policies for returning citizens.

**Consider this:** under current law, an individual could be granted a CQH and secure stable housing but be forced to wait years before even becoming eligible to apply for a CQE. That kind of inconsistency undermines the broader goals of rehabilitation, reintegration, and public safety. To be clear: **House Bill 268 does not alter the CQE application process, the list of disqualifying offenses, or the requirement for judicial review.** The only change proposed is to the eligibility timeline for individuals with felony

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convictions. I'd like to thank my co-sponsor, **Representative Click**, for his partnership on this important legislation. I welcome any questions from the committee.