



**Chairman Kyle Koehler**

**Senate Workforce Development Committee**

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**SB 143 – Opponent Testimony**

Good morning, Chairman Koehler, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Ingram, and members of the Senate Workforce Development committee. Thank you for considering my testimony today in opposition to Senate Bill 143.

ABC of Ohio represents merit shop construction contractors across the state—employers who compete openly on quality, skill, and safety to build Ohio's infrastructure. Our members are deeply committed to workforce development, including providing opportunities for individuals seeking a fresh start through second-chance hiring.

We support the goal of reducing barriers to employment and recidivism. However, SB 143's one-size-fits-all approach toward private employers is simply not the answer. By prohibiting any inquiry about criminal history on initial applications and imposing additional administrative requirements, the bill removes critical flexibility that small and mid-sized employers need to assess fit, safety, and suitability for roles in construction. Job sites involve heavy machinery, hazardous materials, public safety responsibilities, and close teamwork—employers must have the ability to make informed decisions early in order to protect workers, their clients, and the public at large.

As opponents have noted in previous hearings, this legislation creates new administrative burdens, compliance costs, and liability risks, including potential for lawsuits even when hiring decisions are made in good faith. This bill could inadvertently chill voluntary second-chance programs that are working well today, as employers fear added regulatory exposure without adequate protections. Small businesses—many with limited HR departments—would be disproportionately impacted, undermining their ability to hire the best candidates efficiently.

Ohio's construction industry faces ongoing workforce shortages. Mandating restrictions like this could hinder, rather than help, efforts to expand the talent pool. Instead of government mandates, we encourage continued support for voluntary initiatives, incentives for second-chance hiring, and education for employers on best practices—approaches that respect business flexibility while promoting opportunity.

For these reasons, ABC of Ohio respectfully urges the committee to oppose Senate Bill 143. We stand ready to work collaboratively on solutions that truly advance workforce participation, public safety, and economic growth.



Thank you for your time and consideration. I am happy to take any questions from members of the committee.