



*Seek justice. Love mercy. Restore hope.*

March 24, 2026

Ohio Senate – Workforce Development Committee  
Ohio Statehouse  
1 Capitol Square  
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Chairman Koehler, Vice Chair Reynolds, Ranking Member Ingram, and Members of the Workforce Development Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit written testimony in support of House Bill 268. My name is Ally Alfonsetti, and I serve as a legislative strategist for Prison Fellowship. As the nation's largest Christian nonprofit serving currently and formerly incarcerated people and their families, Prison Fellowship asks you to support access to meaningful employment for Ohioans with a criminal record. Obtaining employment following incarceration significantly reduces the probability of recidivism.<sup>1</sup> The inability to find meaningful work creates missed opportunities for success and flourishing by Ohioans who have served their time. By safely expanding access to work for Ohioans with a criminal record, HB268 can help break cycles of crime, addiction, and recidivism.

Because every person is created in the image of God, each has dignity and potential. But nearly 1 in 3 American adults have a criminal record and face significant barriers to education, jobs, housing, and other opportunities needed to reach their potential.<sup>2</sup> In 2024, over 18,000 Ohioans were released from state correctional facilities—with a majority of them returning back to Ohio communities and in need of meaningful employment.<sup>3</sup>

In 2012, Ohio helped our neighbors returning home from incarceration obtain housing by establishing Certificates of Qualified Employment (CQE).<sup>4</sup> Under that law, before individuals with a felony offense can petition for a CQE, they must wait one year after the date of release from incarceration and one year from the date of expiration of all periods of supervision imposed after release. Periods of supervision after release can typically range from two to five years. Supervision requirements often have the expectation that an individual will maintain employment and pay costs associated with supervision.

This bill allows individuals to apply one year after release from incarceration and removes the requirement that they wait an additional year until after the completion of community control or other sanctions. By removing delays to CQE access, we can help more individuals find employment and success on their probation during a key window to leave crime and incarceration

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1 Cherrie Bucknor & Alan Barber, *The Price We Pay: Economic Costs of Barriers to Employment for Former Prisoners and People Convicted of Felonies*, Center for Economic and Policy Research (June 2016), <https://cepr.net/images/stories/reports/employment-prisoners-felonies-2016-06.pdf>.

2 NCSL, *Barrier to Work: Increasing Access to Licensed Occupations for Individuals with Criminal Records*, National Conference of State Legislatures (May 2024), <https://www.ncsl.org/labor-and-employment/barriers-to-work-improving-employment-in-licensed-occupations-for-individuals-with-criminal-records>.

3 ODRC, *2025 Annual Report*, Ohio Department of Rehabilitation & Correction (2025), <https://drc.ohio.gov/about/resource/reports/annual-reports/drc-annual-report-2025>.

4 OH Rev. Code § 2953.25 (2024)

P.O. Box 1550, Merrifield, VA 22116-1550

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behind. Furthermore, this legislation leaves appropriate procedural and substantive safeguards that are currently in the law, ensuring public safety remains a top priority.

Every formerly incarcerated individual is endowed with inherent dignity and has the ability—and responsibility—to live out their God-given potential. By supporting HB 268, you can set up Ohioans for safety, stability, and success in reentry.

Sincerely,

Ally Alfonsetti  
Legislative Strategist  
Prison Fellowship