

*Second Chance: A Comprehensive Approach  
to  
Removing Barriers to Employment Opportunities*

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Working for Change:

*A Second Chance at Work*

Reentry and Workforce Opportunity

Friday, April 25, 2008

H-137 U.S. Capitol

## *Objective:*

### *Remove Barriers to Employment and Co-parenting*

- Bring to light the relationship between institutional and individual barriers to reintegration and employment;
- Explain Second Chance comprehensive approach to addressing systemic inequities; and
- Categorize multi-level benefits to employing the formerly incarcerated.

# *Nexus Between Work and Reentry*

## Institutional:

- State legal prohibitions against employment in certain occupations;
- 1998 reauthorization of the Higher Education Act of 1965 bans financial assistance for higher education ;
- Department of Housing and Urban Development’s “one-strike-and-you’re-out” policy;
- The 1996 federal welfare reform law imposed a lifetime ban on TANF and Food Stamp benefits for people with felony drug convictions regardless of circumstances and subsequent efforts at rehabilitation ; and
- Unrealistically high child support obligations.

## Individual:

- Limited work experience and income with no job prospects, one year after release, as many as 60% of former inmates are not employed in legitimate labor market;
- Undereducated, no marketable skills, lacks work experience and no vocational skills;
- Unable to reunite with family and often homeless within disadvantaged socioeconomic communities;
- Major mental disorders and chronic and infectious disease extensive substance abuse histories; and
- Finds employment in the underground economy; undermining their reintegration into society.

# *Second Chance: Addressing Collateral Consequences*

- A more comprehensive approach that requires collaboration amongst federal agencies (DOJ; DHHS; DOL) and state/local government and private service providers. Grant recipients will be subjected to accountability “performance outcomes”;
- Reauthorizes state and local demonstration grants and improves coordination among service providers, supervision services and Reentry Task Forces, and state substance abuse agencies and criminal justice agencies;
- Creates new and innovative programs to improve offender reentry services;
- Enhances drug treatment and mentoring grant programs; and
- Improves Federal prisoner reentry initiative with the establishment of a comprehensive reentry program and incentives for participation in skills development programs.

# *Multi-level Benefits to Hiring Formally Incarcerated Individuals*

- Individual-level: rehabilitation, work offers the formerly incarcerated an opportunity to develop new roles as productive members of society;
- Family-level: work provides the formerly incarcerated with an income, enabling them to provide financial assistance to their familial and social networks;
- Community-level: as taxpayers, could increase the demand for goods and services in their communities; and
- Larger-society: stands to reap public safety benefits when the formerly incarcerated are engaged in legitimate work.