

Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2019 Praised by the Church of Scientology

New law increases employment opportunities with federal agencies and contractors for formerly incarcerated people helping them reenter their communities

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, December 20, 2019 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act of 2019 (FCA) was passed by Congress and signed by the President today. A wide variety of secular and religious organizations worked in coalition to get this criminal justice reform bill passed, including Scientologists, who have been consistent advocates for criminal justice reforms such as the FCA.

The new law makes it easier for formerly incarcerated individuals to make their case for employment when applying for federal jobs. A type of legislation known as "ban the box," the FCA requires federal agencies and contractors to wait until the conditional offer stage of the hiring process before requesting conviction record information from a job applicant.

The bill was sponsored with bi-partisan support by Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ), Senator Ron Johnson (R-WI), Congressman Doug Collins (R-GA) and the late Congressman Elijah Cummings (D-MD).

The Church of Scientology's National Affairs Office praised the passage of the Fair Chance to Compete for Jobs Act. John Stanard, the Church's Social Betterment Policy Director, commented, "In keeping with our belief that people are basically good and capable of rehabilitation, we supported the Fair Chance Act as it will provide individuals returning from incarceration a better opportunity at employment with federal agencies and contractors."

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The legislation was supported by a broad group of religious and secular organizations who advocated for its

passage, including the Church of Scientology's DC-based National Affairs Office, the ACLU, the American Conservative Union, the Justice Action Network, JustLeadershipUSA, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, Prison Fellowship and many other national organizations.



Church of Scientology National Affairs Office, Washington, DC

A 2012 study by the Bureau of Justice Statistics showed that over 100 million people living in the United States have a criminal record. The unemployment rate for people with a criminal record is particularly high—over five times the unemployment rate for the general population. A study by Princeton and Harvard researchers indicated that those who check the box on a job application indicating they have a criminal record are 50% less likely to receive a callback than those who do not check the box.

That's where the Fair Chance Act comes in.

"Given that over 95% of those incarcerated today will eventually be returning to their communities," Stanard continued, "the FCA, by providing meaningful employment opportunities for our returning citizens, is a win-win for public safety as well as for the individual."



John Stanard, Social Betterment Policy Director,
National Affairs Office

The Fair Chance Act will:

- Prevent the federal government from requesting criminal history information from applicants until they reach the conditional offer stage.
- Prohibit federal contractors from requesting criminal history information from candidates for positions within the scope of federal contracts until the conditional offer stage.
- Include important exceptions for positions related to law enforcement and national security duties, positions requiring access to classified information, and positions for which access to criminal history information before the conditional offer stage is required by law.

Scientology's approach to criminal justice begins with the understanding that rehabilitation is possible and that punishment alone is not only unworkable but in fact worsens the condition of incarcerated individuals. The Church-supported criminal reform program, [Criminon](#)—whose curriculum is derived from Scientology Founder L. Ron Hubbard's works—is based on these exact principles.

"The Church will be continuing its advocacy work, in collaboration with its national faith partners and other like-minded organizations, to enact further, much needed, reforms to improve the criminal justice system," concluded Stanard.

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