

Compilation of Media Featuring Fair Chance and Ban the Box

NELP has collected media featuring fair chance policies and accomplishments to help support your efforts in developing effective media for your campaign. The pieces below provide examples of the types of worker stories, employer voices, and themes throughout op-eds, editorials, and news reports that influence and shape the public debate. Note that some pieces use terms such as “ex-offenders” or “ex-convicts.” To reduce stigmatization, NELP recommends working with the media to use terms that lead with “people,” such as “people with records.”

Articles Highlighting Worker Stories and the Business Community

(Worker featured) *The New York Times* “Michael Hugh Mirsky landed a temporary job in December rolling stacks of crated milk and orange juice to the loading docks at a commercial dairy in central New Jersey. He’s not making much, and he doesn’t know how long it will last, but after 30 months of unemployment, he counts himself lucky. Mr. Mirsky is a convicted criminal, and work is hard to find.” [Out of Trouble, but Criminal Records Keep Men Out of Work](#) (Feb. 28, 2015).

(Worker and business group featured) *Fortune* “‘The hardest thing for all of us is finding a safe environment and housing so we can channel our energy into going back to school and getting a job,’ says Rogers, 46, who’s now back in school and works part-time in the San Francisco area as a program assistant for the California Coalition for Women Prisoners.” [A Growing Movement to Protect Convicted Job Applicants](#) (Jan. 14, 2014).

(Worker featured) *San Francisco Chronicle* “Fuller was fired from a janitorial job this year after his employer discovered that he had failed to note a 1974 arrest for misdemeanor trespassing on his job application - even though he had noted his actual convictions, including felony welfare fraud.” [Push to Ban Crime Box on Job Applications Expands](#) (Dec. 10, 2013).

(Worker featured) *The Nation* “Luis Rivera had some peace of mind for about five months, from late fall of 2010 through early spring of the following year. That’s the closest thing he’s seen to financial stability in more than twenty years. ‘I got hired for a wonderful job. It was a clerk/porter/doorman position at a high-rise classical building in the East Village,’ he recalls wistfully. Rivera, 44, has a wife of twenty-five years and three teenage daughters.” [Boxed In: How a Criminal Record Keeps you Unemployed for Life](#) (Nov. 5, 2013).

(Employers featured) *Star Tribune* “Target Corp. will roll out a national program early next year that will eliminate the box on employment applications that asks job seekers whether they have a criminal record. The initiative, part of a budding ‘Ban the Box’ movement across the country, calls for employers to wait until a prospective employee is being interviewed or has a provisional job offer before inquiring whether he or she has a criminal past.” [Target to Ban Criminal History Box on Job Applications](#) (Oct. 26, 2013).

Editorial Endorsements

The New York Times “There are excellent recommendations for further federal action in a [new report](#) from the National Employment Law Project, a research and advocacy group. It urges Mr. Obama to issue a presidential memo directing federal agencies to rewrite confusing, nontransparent or flatly prejudicial hiring guidelines that unjustifiably shut out those with convictions. It also calls for an executive order that would require federal contractors to postpone criminal background checks until a conditional job offer was made and to use the considerations laid out in the E.E.O.C. ruling. These measures would bring the federal government much closer to becoming “a model employer.” [Remove Unfair Barriers to Employment](#) (Feb. 27, 2015).

The New York Times “The California Legislature passed a bill last month that bars government agencies from asking job applicants about criminal convictions until the agency has determined that the applicant meets minimum qualifications for the job. This measure will help remove unfair barriers to employment that keep millions of qualified workers trapped at the margins of society. Gov. Jerry Brown should sign this sensible bill.” [A Second Chance in California](#) (Oct. 4, 2013).

Los Angeles Times “There is a growing movement nationwide to ‘ban the box’ from employment applications and end discrimination against people who have spent time behind bars. It is time for California to join the movement, cautiously but deliberately. Cautiously, because employers have a right to know who their workers are and a duty to protect their businesses and workplaces; and deliberately, because we’re foolishly punishing ourselves by not welcoming safe and potentially productive people into the workplace.” [To Help People with Records, Ban the Box](#) (July 3, 2013).

Op-Eds and Blogs

(Advocate) *San Jose Mercury News* “One component of ‘fair chance’ is to remove the check-box that asks about convictions and to delay any background-check screening. Too often employers discard jobseekers who’ve checked the box, regardless of qualifications, job-relatedness of the conviction, or rehabilitation. That’s why Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe ‘banned the box’ earlier this month in his executive order, which followed Georgia Gov. Nathan Deal’s similar measure.” [Apple Hiring: Commitment to Second Chance for People with Records Still Unclear](#) (April 14, 2015).

(Small Business Owner) *The Guardian* “I have a lot of titles in my life. I am a husband, father, college graduate, former corporate and small business employee, and retired small business owner. The list is long, and I am proud of it. In Florida, I am also called a ‘felon.’ The title has stayed with me in the years since I served my sentence, and won’t go away.

I am not alone. There are 70 million adults with arrest or conviction records in the United States - or about one in three adults, according the National Employment Law Project.” [Keeping People With Felonies From Earning A Living Doesn't Make Us Safer, Only Poorer](#) (March 31, 2015).

(Economist) *Washington Post* “Criminal records create tall barriers to finding work. Two of my Center on Budget colleagues, Mike Mitchell and Mike Leachman, recently wrote an important paper wherein they point out that ‘...men with a previous criminal conviction worked roughly nine fewer weeks, and earned 40 percent less, each year than otherwise similar non-offenders...by age 48, [earnings] are less than half among men who have been incarcerated than among comparable men who have not been incarcerated.’ One way to help these people get a fair shake in the job market is to ‘ban the box.’” [Fair-Hiring Practices for Those with Criminal Records](#) (Jan. 27, 2015).

(Law Enforcement) *Cavalier Daily* “Do you ever think about what happens on the very last day of a person’s prison sentence? We often think that the criminal justice process starts with a crime, the police arrive, they arrest someone, the person is found guilty, sent to prison and done. However, the reality is that this process does not truly end until the prisoner comes back home. In fact, 95 percent of all prisoners will eventually be released from incarceration.” [New Legislation Must Make it Easier for Formerly Incarcerated to Find Jobs](#) (Jan. 13, 2014).

(Legislator) *Delaware Online* “We often tell our children that a job is a source of pride and independence. Having gainful employment empowers people to take control of their lives. This is especially true for the tens of thousands of Delawareans who have run afoul of the law, paid their debt to society and are looking to put their lives back on track. However, even after the jail term, probation, fines and restitution have been fulfilled, life post-conviction is often fraught with unique challenges.” [Delaware Should “Ban the Box” for Public Employees](#) (Jan. 8, 2014).

Press Releases

NELP Press Release “The Louisville Metro Council voted 26-0 last Thursday in favor of a new law removing the conviction question from job applications for the city and many of its 26,000 vendors.” [Heart of Bluegrass State is Latest to ‘Ban the Box’ with Bipartisan Support: Part of Growing National Movement](#) (March 17, 2014).

NELP Press Release “Today, California Governor Jerry Brown signed into law AB 218, a bill that removes questions about convictions from both state and local agency job applications and postpones such inquiries until later in the hiring process. California is now one of 10 states, representing nearly every region of the country, that have embraced ban-the-box policies, as nationwide momentum grows to reduce unfair barriers to employment for people with criminal records.” [Governor Brown Signs Bill Extending ‘Ban the Box’ To All Public Employers in California](#) (Oct. 10, 2013). ■