



**Opportunity. Community. Impact.**

[www.TheChicagoUrbanLeague.org](http://www.TheChicagoUrbanLeague.org)

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**May 20, 2015**

Dear Commissioners,

Since 1916 the Chicago Urban League has supported Chicago's African American community through educational opportunity, economic development and social justice. Critical to our efforts is our working with policymakers to address the obstacles that continue to hold our communities back. Such is the case with legislation proposed by Cook County Commissioner Bridget Gainer.

I write you today in support of the Cook County Apprenticeship and the Credit History Ordinance amendments. These measures will encourage companies to hire participants in apprenticeship programs and penalize those that attempt to use credit backgrounds to discriminate against qualified candidates for employment.

Apprenticeship training remains a part of the fabric of the Cook County workforce. It has been a key component of the workforce development training of the Chicago Urban League because we know that it can lead to job opportunities with competitive wages. While we work diligently to increase the number of African Americans who have access to apprenticeship training, we must encourage employers to provide the necessary job opportunities that result in empowered individuals, strong families and stabilized communities.

On the workforce front, we must remove the barriers to employment that are faced by individuals who have a challenging credit history. Instead of blocking those with problems in their credit history from jobs, we should provide them with the financial literacy tools they need to repair their credit and secure employment.

We are proud to stand in support of the proposed amendments and hope that you will join Commissioner Gainer in voting affirmatively for them. Thank you for your consideration.

Yours in the movement,

**Shari Runner**

Senior Vice President

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