



Board of Commissioners of Cook County

118 North Clark Street
Chicago, IL

Legislation Text

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PROPOSED RESOLUTION

RESOLUTION DECLARING THE MONTH OF APRIL SECOND CHANCE MONTH IN COOK COUNTY

WHEREAS, statistics proves that nearly 1 in 3 American adults have criminal records, which can have serious effects on the livelihood of individuals seeking housing, careers, educational and other daily incentives necessary for people to live. Some refer to these impacts as negative connotations to changed human beings; and;

WHEREAS, the United States has the highest incarceration rate in the world accounting for more than 20% of the world's prison population, despite the United States only making up roughly 5% of the global population; and

WHEREAS, there are currently about 40,000 plus collateral consequences that impact Americans with criminal records making it significantly difficult for these Americans to reintegrate back into their communities; and;

WHEREAS, the re-entry period is a critical time where both risk and protective factors can impact outcomes for returning residents who greatly benefit from support, services, and a second chance as they navigate the challenges of returning from incarceration; and:

WHEREAS, Cook County is truly passionate about human rights and believes that every individual in the county of Cook is endowed and treasured with human dignity, respect, and love. Cook County is committed to providing formerly incarcerated residents the support they deserve, and;

WHEREAS, the month of April being dedicated as Second Chance Month emboldens and reinforces the creation of new, bold, innovative, and equitable opportunities for those individuals who have already served their prison time to re-enter into society as positive, resourceful, and beneficial contributors to the community; and;

WHEREAS, The Second Chance Act of 2007 provides program services in the following areas:

- State and Local Reentry Demonstration Projects
- State and Local Reentry Courts
- Prosecution Drug Treatment Alternatives to Prison
- Family-Based Substance Abuse Treatment
- Evaluate Educational Methods at Prisons, Jail, and Juvenile Facilities
- Technology Careers Training Demonstration Grants
- Offender Reentry Substance Abuse and Criminal Justice Collaboration
- Responsible Reintegration of Offenders Grants for job placement and training
- Federal Prisoner Reentry Initiative
- Offender Reentry Research

WHEREAS, in 2008, Congressman Danny K. Davis, authored and diligently fought for the passage of the Second Chance Act which has helped over 100,000 returning Residents successfully re-enter their communities and has provided them with vital training, employment, mentoring, and treatment services. Congressman Davis, along with Cook County Commissioner Dennis Deer, George Williams, and Tumia Romero, worked on developing and passing the Second Chance Act of 2007 and;

WHEREAS, the Second Chance Act passed in the U.S. House of Representatives by 347 to 62, in the U.S. Senate by unanimous consent, and the President signed the legislation into law on April 9, 2008. Since then, the Second Chance Act was reauthorized in 2019 .and;

WHEREAS, in 2017, the Prison Fellowship, the largest national non-profit organization serving individuals that are incarcerated organized the inaugural Second Chance Month, in which over 77 organizations joined Prison Fellowship in their efforts and in 2018 over 200 organizations joined to support their efforts and;

WHEREAS, over the course of 2023 Cook County through the Justice Advisory Council (JAC) established a Reentry services team and dedicated approximately 23 million dollars in American Rescue Plan Act funding toward rental assistance and wraparound services for returning residents through Cook County Reconnect Program: and;

WHEREAS, the JAC and the Bureau of Economic Development support the Chicago Cook Workforce Partnership's Road Home program a comprehensive reentry program beginning pre-release working to eliminate the barriers to coming home successfully particularly barriers to employment; and;

WHEREAS, on March 29, 2024, President Joseph R. Biden announced April 2024 as Second Chance Month and called for observance of the month with the proper programs, ceremonies, and activities, while making historic investments to expand access to mental health and substance use services. A total of \$400 million was provided to prevent juvenile justice involvement, enhancing systems to be more responsive to the needs of youth, as well as 3 billion dollars being provided to fund educational programs that provide services, interventions, and support.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the President of the Board, along with the Cook County Board of Commissioners, do hereby proclaim April 2024 as Second Chance Month in Cook County; observing this month with appropriate activities to heighten the understanding of Second Chances by promoting awareness of the legal and social barriers for individuals with a criminal record who have paid their debt to society.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that a suitable copy of this resolution be spread upon the official proceeding of this Honorable Body to commemorate this occasion