The Business Case: Employment & Criminal Records

**THE NEED**

Georgia labor pools are tight and expected to tighten further.

From 2016-2017 Georgia:
- Increased job opportunities by 116,500
- Increased labor force by only 114,545

**THE BARRIER**

4.2 million Georgians have a criminal record (40% of population). Georgians with a criminal record are often not considered for jobs.

47,000 laws create barriers for those with a record – over 60% relate to employment.

90% of employers conduct background checks.

**THE OPPORTUNITY:** Hiring individuals with a record is:
- Good for the Employer
- Good for the Economy
- Good for the Community

**GOOD FOR THE EMPLOYER:**
- **Retention is higher** - Studies of employers, including Johns Hopkins, show that employees with a record have a retention rate that is equal to or higher than the general population.
- **Promotions stronger** - Military case study by a Harvard Sociologist found that individuals with a conviction were promoted faster.
- **Motivation and loyalty** - Many employers, such as Butterball Farms, observed their employees with records are more highly motivated and loyal.
- **Protections and incentives** - There are several federal and state level tax incentives and protections for employers that hire individuals with a record (see reverse).

**GOOD FOR THE ECONOMY:**
- Increases Tax Base & Boosts Sales Tax
- Decreases GDP Losses (estimated at $80 Billion)

**GOOD FOR THE COMMUNITY – EMPLOYMENT REDUCES RECIDIVISM:**
- Employment is the strongest antidote against reoffending.
- 5 years after conviction, an individual’s likelihood of offending is the same as the general population.
RESOURCES
1. Data from Labor Insights/Jobs
2. DOC

**INCENTIVES & PROTECTIONS FOR EMPLOYERS**

**Georgia Negligent Hiring Protection**
- Creates a rebuttable presumption of due diligence in screening.
- Applied to individuals that have been pardoned and individuals with Program and Treatment Completion Certificates.

**Georgia Qualified Jobs Tax Credit**
- For hiring someone within one year of release or on parole.
- $2,500 – per employee; $50,000 max per employer, must employ for 40 weeks within a 52 week period

**Federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit (WOTC)**
- Between $1,200 and $9,600 per employee
- Employee with felony conviction & hired within one year of release

**Federal Bonding Program**
- Bond issued by the Georgia Department of Labor
- $5,000 no-cost Employer liability bond for hiring people with a conviction