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The Georgia Justice Project's Concept Paper for Partnering with the Business Community

Project Title:	The Business Community: A Necessary Partner to Achieving Successful Reentry in Georgia
Purpose:	The facts are astonishing: 1 in 3 Georgians have a criminal history, the annual cost of corrections is more than \$1 billion, over 90% of those incarcerated will be released and the state's recidivism rate is nearly 35%. The Department of Corrections has estimated that a recidivism rate reduction of 1% would yield taxpayers \$7 million per year. The overwhelming research indicates that the single most important indicator of recidivism is stable employment, yet employers are often reasonably concerned about hiring people with criminal records. Governor Nathan Deal and the General Assembly are committed to reducing recidivism and increasing tax revenue in Georgia. No stakeholder is more important to achieving these objectives than the business community.
Project Description:	The project will convene a series of roundtable discussions with employers and employment lawyers around the state to better understand the challenges faced by employers, and partner with the business community and community advocates to create realistic solutions to getting people with criminal records back to work in Georgia.
Goals/Objectives:	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Build partnership with the business community to achieve successful reentry <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Listen to the concerns and suggestions of employers b. Provide research and information about risks/liability and find ways to limit 2. Partner with business community to hire people with criminal records <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. Identify industries in need of skilled and qualified workers b. Discuss ways to reduce risk and limit liability c. Discuss effectiveness of tax incentives
Estimated Timeline/ Methodology	<p>It is most ideal for a long-term partnership with the business community that is at least as long as the reform to achieve successful reentry and reduced recidivism. The following is the suggested first steps:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Identify participants and convene introductory meeting on the issues and the goals for the project 2. Convene second meeting and listen to concerns and suggested solutions from employers 3. Research concerns and identify solutions that adequately respond 4. Convene third meeting and discuss researched solutions as well as hear from employers who consider and hire people with criminal records. 5. Convene a meeting and prepare recommendations
Benefits/Anticipated Outcomes	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rehabilitated people can provide for themselves and their families which results in increased tax revenue and reduced recidivism 2. Industries and employers in need of skilled and qualified applicants can fill available positions which will revitalize Georgia's economy