

Openings

- Good afternoon Honorable Members of the Environmental and Transportation Committee,
- My name is Qiana, and I am honored to speak before you today in support of the Fair Chance Housing Act. As the Executive Director of Life After Release, an organization dedicated to supporting individuals reentering society after incarceration, I write to you today with a heavy heart and a pressing concern that strikes at the very core of the challenges faced by those with criminal records seeking stable housing.

Mid-Sections

- I speak not only as an advocate but also as a survivor of the injustices perpetrated by our current housing system. Despite my efforts to rebuild my life and contribute positively to society after incarceration, I have personally experienced the devastating consequences of housing discrimination based on criminal history.
- Denied housing opportunities because of my past, I found myself in a desperate situation where I had no choice but to sub-lease from someone deeply entrenched in drug use. This decision, made out of necessity, led to an unthinkable scenario where my youngest son was endangered by unnecessary interactions with law enforcement. As a formerly incarcerated woman, this experience brought severe emotional distress and left me feeling profoundly unsafe in my own home.
- This harrowing ordeal underscores the urgent need for legislative action to address the systemic barriers faced by individuals with criminal records in accessing safe and stable housing. The Fair Chance Housing Act, such as the one before you today, represents a beacon of hope for countless individuals like myself who are trapped in a cycle of instability and uncertainty.
- Furthermore, these experiences not only undermine our sense of dignity and self-worth but also hinder our ability to fully reintegrate into society as productive and self-sufficient members. The Fair Chance Housing Act, represents a glimmer of hope for individuals like myself who are trapped in this cycle of instability and dehumanization. By prohibiting housing discrimination based on criminal history and promoting fair evaluation criteria, this legislation offers a glimmer of hope for a brighter future where everyone, regardless of their past, has the opportunity to establish a stable home and rebuild their lives

Closing

- I urge you to support the Fair Chance Housing Act and take a stand for justice, equality, and compassion. Every individual, regardless of their past mistakes, deserves a fair

chance to rebuild their lives and contribute positively to society. This bill represents a crucial step in the right direction, and we urge you to support this legislation for the betterment of our communities and the individuals within them.

- Thank you for considering our perspective, and we hope a favorable report this legislation