

JOTF JOB OPPORTUNITIES TASK FORCE

Advocating better skills, jobs, and incomes

SUPPORT THE “GIVE ME A CHANCE” ACT

Prohibit Employment Discrimination on the Basis of College Degree

THE CHALLENGE

- Roughly [62%](#) of Maryland workers and [two-thirds](#) of U.S. workers lack a bachelor's degree.
- According to the [Bureau of Labor Statistics](#), **74% of new jobs** created from 2007 to 2016 “required” a bachelor's degree despite most workers currently occupying those positions not having one.
- With the rise of online job-search engines causing a massive influx of resumes, most employers have adopted automated methods to screen applicants - with education and certain keywords being primary screening tools.
- Screening for bachelor's degrees [excludes](#) nearly **80 percent of Latino workers**, almost **70 percent of African Americans** and more than **70 percent of rural Americans** across all backgrounds.
- Older workers with years of experience on the job are routinely denied promotion or advancement due to the lack of a college degree leading to disruptions in employee morale and productivity.
- The current structure also excludes millions of Marylanders who are “skilled through alternative routes” (STARs) such as military service, certificate programs, community college, apprenticeships, fellowships, and direct front line experience in service and logistics. [Two-thirds of all essential workers are STARs](#). Blocking advancement for such a large part of the workforce is economically toxic.
- By May 2021, Americans 25 years or older with college degrees fully recovered all their pandemic job losses while similarly aged [Americans without college degrees remained almost 5 million jobs below](#) pre-pandemic levels.

CURRENT LAW

- Maryland law does not prohibit private-sector employers from inquiring into the educational history of an applicant at all levels of the current hiring process. This includes internal advancement for most employers.
- There is no prohibition on "keyword searches" or education in online application screening tools.

THE SOLUTION: PASS THE “GIVE ME A CHANCE” ACT

- The proposed legislation prohibits an employer from (1) developing or implementing an application (or a hiring process) that uses a college or other higher education degree as a limitation for who can apply; (2) using an applicant's lack of a college or other higher education degree to deny an applicant the opportunity to apply for a position; (3) prohibiting an employee from applying for (or pursuing) internal advancement within the employer's organization on the basis of an employee lacking a college or other higher degree; or (4) inquiring about an applicant's lack of a college or other higher education degree during the interview process.
- This bill DOES NOT affect positions that require a license to perform: lawyers, doctors, accountants, technicians, etc.
- The bill DOES NOT prevent the interviewee from announcing their credentials on applications or during the interview and DOES NOT force the employer to hire anyone they deem unfit.

For more information, contact:

Christopher Dews / Senior Policy Advocate / Christopher@jotf.org / 301-412-5399