

1 **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION ENCOURAGING THE**
2 **EMPLOYMENT OF QUALIFIED EX-OFFENDERS BY**
3 **PUBLIC ENTITIES**

4 2022 GENERAL SESSION

5 STATE OF UTAH

6 **Chief Sponsor: Ashlee Matthews**

7 Senate Sponsor: _____

9 **LONG TITLE**

10 **General Description:**

11 This resolution encourages all public entities to take seriously the need to employ
12 ex-offenders and supports the employment of qualified ex-offenders by public entities.

13 **Highlighted Provisions:**

14 This resolution:

15 ▶ recognizes that ex-offenders have paid their debt to society and many wish to be
16 contributing members of the state's workforce;

17 ▶ encourages all public entities to take seriously the need to employ ex-offenders; and

18 ▶ supports the employment of qualified ex-offenders by public entities.

19 **Special Clauses:**

20 None

22 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

23 WHEREAS, Utah has an incarceration rate of approximately 206 per 100,000 people,
24 with more than 14,000 confined in state prisons or local jails and another 15,000 on probation
25 or parole;

26 WHEREAS, a robust body of research consistently shows that once an individual has
27 been released from incarceration, finding employment is vital to the reintegration of that



28 individual into society;

29 WHEREAS, people who have been incarcerated face a variety of collateral
30 consequences that may limit access to employment, business and occupational licensing,
31 housing, education, and other opportunities;

32 WHEREAS, the unemployment rate among ex-offenders is nearly five times higher
33 than that for the general population and the homelessness rate among ex-offenders is nearly ten
34 times higher than the general population;

35 WHEREAS, a lack of employment, housing, and other support systems upon reentry
36 increases the likelihood of continued involvement in the criminal justice system;

37 WHEREAS, the state has a vested interest in reducing the rate of unemployment and
38 homelessness among ex-offenders;

39 WHEREAS, recent measures by Utah and other states, such as "ban the box" initiatives,
40 have taken necessary steps to disincentivize unnecessary discrimination based on an
41 individual's status as an ex-offender;

42 WHEREAS, although these measures have helped some ex-offenders secure better
43 employment outcomes, there is still an urgent need for employers to actively seek out
44 ex-offenders;

45 WHEREAS, employers who hire ex-offenders may be able to receive fidelity bonds
46 free of charge through the U.S. Department of Labor Federal Bonding Program;

47 WHEREAS, employers who hire ex-felons may be able to obtain a federal tax benefit
48 under the federal Work Opportunity Tax Credit; and

49 WHEREAS, public entities have a unique opportunity to both set the example and
50 utilize ex-offenders as a much-needed resource:

51 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the State of Utah, the
52 Governor concurring therein, recognizes that ex-offenders have paid their debt to society and
53 many wish to be contributing members of the state's workforce.

54 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the State of Utah, the Governor
55 concurring therein, encourages all public entities to take seriously the need to employ
56 ex-offenders.

57 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature of the State of Utah, the Governor
58 concurring therein, supports the employment of qualified ex-offenders by public entities.