



CITY OF PITTSBURGH

“America’s Most Livable City”

Office of Mayor William Peduto

May 17, 2018

The Honorable Joseph Scarnati
Senate Box 203025
Harrisburg, PA 17120-3025
Room: 292 Main Capitol

The Honorable Mike Turzai
139 Main Capitol
PO Box 202028
Harrisburg, PA 17120-2028

Dear Senate President Pro Tempore Scarnati and Speaker Turzai,

The need for criminal justice reform in this country is palpable, now more than ever. With HB 1419 and SB 529, Pennsylvania has the ability to improve the opportunities of citizens returning from prison by making it easier for them to reintegrate into society.

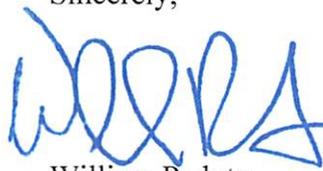
HB 1419 and SB 529 are measured bills that would seal the records of low level non-violent convictions and non-conviction misdemeanors for former offenders that have returned to society and have not recidivated for at least ten years. This would allow formerly incarcerated people to enter the job market without the stigma of a criminal conviction. These bills would go further in that they would ensure that employers are protected from liability in the rare occurrence that they are implicated in wrong doing by hiring a former offender.

HB 1419 and SB 529 are not simply issues of justice. For many cities struggling to increase rates of employment, we must begin to address the barriers that formerly incarcerated people face and ensure that they have greater access to employment. For Pittsburgh, we see removing these barriers as essential to increasing our workforce and lifting people out of vulnerability. It is notable that these bills are supported by the Greater Pittsburgh Chamber of Commerce, the Pennsylvania Chamber of Business and Industry, the Chamber of Commerce for Greater Philadelphia, the Chester County Chamber of Business and Industry, and the Harrisburg Regional Chamber.

Senate President Pro Tempore Scarnati
Speaker Turzai
Page 2
May 18, 2018

Therefore, I urge the Pennsylvania General Assembly to send a clean slate bill to the Governor's desk before summer recess. Please contact Grant Gittlen, (grant.gittlen@pittsburghpa.gov) with questions.

Sincerely,



William Peduto
Mayor, City of Pittsburgh

CC

Senator Jake Corman
Senator Jay Costa
Representative Dave Reed
Representative Frank Dermody
Senator Daylin Leach
Senator Stewart Greenleaf
Representative Joe Petrarca
Representative Ron Marsico