



To: Oregon Senate Workforce Committee
From: Andrea “Drea” Grandy, 2626 N Willis Blvd., Portland, OR 97217
Re: Ban the Box Legislation, HB 3025
Date: May 18, 2015

My name is Drea and I am a member of PFLAG Portland Black Chapter. I am writing to extend my strong support for HB 3025, to ban the box on employment applications in Oregon.

Currently, I am in barber school to get my barber license. I also am God parent of four kids. I think it is so vital to me and so many other people I know that you ban the box in Oregon.

I was only incarcerated for 14 days total—12 days at Multnomah County Department of Corrections and my last two at the Inverness Jail. It felt like 14 years to me, which is why I'm trying to do everything in my power stay positive and to stay out of jail.

Following my time in jail I was unemployed for nearly three years from September 22, 2012 and February 2015 was the hardest and lowest period of my life. I really struggled to find a job. I know the requirement for me to check that box held me back from interviews and housing options. I was homeless for two years, living on someone's couch for one year and living in a tent and a car for another year.

Finally, in February 2015, I was able to get a job as a care provider.

I am also black and LGBTQ. While I believe coming out made me stronger and made me different, my identity does draw the attention of law enforcement. It has been hard dealing with police and close-minded people. I don't want to be labeled as a felon and not get a fair chance at life-- a job, school, housing, cars, traveling and so on.

Now just because I had a record did not make me a bad person. I just made bad decisions in my life when I was younger. I had few opportunities at that time in my past life.

With the support of my partner and my mother I'm just happy I'm not in the system. My family has stayed by my side and now all I want to do my part and take care of them by earning a pay check, paying my bills and live my life openly and honestly.

All of us deserve a second chance. It is very important and necessary to Ban the Box, we all deserve a fair chance. Please support the passage of HB 3025.