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To: Chair Dembrow
Members of the Senate Committee on Workforce

Fr: Tom Chamberlain, President
Oregon AFL-CIO

Re: *Support for HB 3025-A to Ban the Box*

May 20th, 2015

Chair Dembrow and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony at today's important hearing. My name is Tom Chamberlain and I am the President of the Oregon AFL-CIO, the statewide federation of labor unions, and an advocate for all workers in the legislative process. We represent over 300,000 working Oregonians and are proud to be on the front lines of the fight for an economy that works for everyone. We believe that banning the box and giving every Oregonian a fair chance is a crucial component to this effort.

According to a recent poll from *The New York Times*, men with previous convictions account for nearly 34 percent of all non-working men between the ages of 25-54ⁱ. Our economy is still recovering from the Great Recession, but that recovery has yet to extend to workers with previous convictions. According to a study on economic mobility, there has been a 30% reduction in previously-incarcerated people being hired for work since 2008ⁱⁱ.

As testified today, it is clear that workers with previous convictions are not being hired. That is not because they are not trying, but rather because employers are not allowing them to even interview for a job. Research from the National Employment Law Project has affirmed that a criminal record reduces the likelihood of a callback for a job interview by 50%ⁱⁱⁱ.

Oregon stands now at a crossroads. We can choose to continue to punish people who have served their time and continue to bar them from employment or we can choose to pass HB 3025-A to reduce barriers, ban the box and give more Oregonians the opportunity to find work. A job is an integral part of a person's success, their identity and is the top way to combat recidivism.

We have an opportunity to reduce our incarcerated population, increase our workforce and make our communities stronger. I urge you to support a fair chance for all and to pass HB 3025-A.

ⁱ <http://www.breitbart.com/big-government/2014/12/11/ny-times-male-workers-disappearing/>

ⁱⁱ Bruce Western and Becky Pettit, "Collateral Costs: Incarceration's effect on Economic Mobility," Washington DC: The Pew Charitable Trusts, 2010.

ⁱⁱⁱ Devon Pager, "The Mark of a Criminal Record," *American Journal of Sociology* 108[5], 2003: 937-975.