

SB 969

Relating to persons with criminal convictions

After release from incarceration, ex-offenders are expected to reintegrate into society by obtaining suitable housing, complying with court-ordered payment of debts such as restitution and/or child support in arrears, and supporting themselves, all of which hinges on their ability to secure gainful employment. Studies have found that access to housing and employment are among the two most effective ways to reduce recidivism. When ex-offenders are productively engaged in their communities, working and supporting their families, the community is safer and their families are more economically secure.

SB 969 establishes the 15-member Task Force on Reentry, Employment and Housing charged with studying and recommending methods and actions that state and local government should adopt to reduce barriers to housing and employment for ex-offenders. The bill convenes the Department of Housing and Community Services, the Department of Corrections, the Employment Department, the Higher Education Coordinating Commission, the Oregon Criminal Justice Commission, and county representatives to identify and recommend strategies for coordinating and leveraging resources in order to assist ex-offenders with timely and equitable access to jobs and housing that would provide the stability needed to prevent recidivism.

Legislative Administration and the Department of Housing and Community Services will use existing staff and resources to support the task force.

The Human Services Subcommittee recommends SB 969 be reported out do pass.