

May 21, 2017

House Committee on Judiciary
Oregon State Legislature
900 Court St. NE
Salem, OR 97301

Dear Chair Barker, Vice-Chairs Olson and Williamson, and Members of the Committee,

I am writing today in support of SB 690A, Certificates of Good Standing. It is my understanding SB 690A creates an inexpensive, highly vetted, and coveted document to assist formerly incarcerated individuals who have demonstrated exceptional rehabilitation by issuing them an empirical document validating their good behavior.

I was incarcerated for four years at Coffee Creek Correctional Institution. I have now been out for two years and three months. Since being released I have not had any violations of my parole, I have completed all the treatment required of me, as well as more, and I have proceeded to be successful in life after release. All this being said, I've worked very hard and that does not mean that I haven't had to face some very large barriers in my journey.

When I was looking for a place to live, my felony was a huge barrier in getting my name on a lease. It was very hard to be looked at and rejected just because of a bad choice I made in my past. It's a very devastating feeling to be judged based on having that on my record, regardless of what I have done in my life to change.

I am working, going to school full time and about to get my associates degree. I am active in my recovery and I am a civically engaged individual. I like to volunteer with matters that are important to me. All this being said, it was a long process before I was able to get my name on a lease and I think that having this Certificate would be something that we would be able to show that holds some ground saying that we have worked hard to rehabilitate ourselves and change our lives. Having a certificate to be able to show when applying for jobs, housing, and scholarships would benefit a lot of formerly incarcerated persons to get the confidence that we can continue to succeed and all our hard work will be worth it.

In closing I would like to say that knowing a Certificate of Good Standing has been issued based on a comprehensive review of an individual's life from the highest, most relevant authorities in our state, is in everyone's best interest and provides a valuable peace of mind. The Certificate of Good Standing should demonstrate to the re-entry gatekeepers, such as employers and landlords, that an individual holding this honor has truly turned their life around in the eyes of the highest authorities in Oregon.

I urge your support of SB 690A.

Thank you,
Ashley Dorety
Tualatin, Oregon