



Support for Clean Slate Legislation

Testimony by Claire Dorfman, Vice President for State Government Affairs, JPMorgan Chase

Thank you Codes Committee Chair Bailey and Committee Members:

My name is Claire Dorfman, and I am from JPMorgan Chase, proudly one of the largest employers and contributors to the economy of the state of New York. I am submitting testimony in support of S1553A/A6399, Clean Slate legislation, which would implement automatic record expungement in New York State.

One in three Americans has an arrest or conviction record that can significantly impact their ability to get a job, housing, or an education. The petition-based expungement system is costly, complicated and time consuming. In New York state, more than 600,000 people are eligible to have their records sealed, but very few pursue the complex process.¹ This means that even after fulfilling their justice system obligations, people with criminal records often continue to be blocked from fully participating in the economy and their community.

The drag on the earning potential of tens of millions of Americans are costs not only borne by individuals, their families, and their communities, but also have larger economic consequences to business and society. A recent Brennan Center report states that the average person with a conviction misses out on roughly \$100,000 in earnings over the course of a career. Someone who was imprisoned as a young adult – regardless of the offense – suffers an average of \$484,400 in lost earnings. This issue also disproportionately affects people of color – three-quarters of New York State’s formerly imprisoned population is Black or Latinx.²

Clean Slate legislation can help to change this. As we continue to recover from the pandemic, businesses are adapting to economic conditions and resuming their search for skilled workers. By reducing barriers to employment for those with criminal records, we will be able to get more people back to work more quickly.

JPMorgan Chase is committed to giving people across the country a second chance.

- In the past, we have provided comments to the Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation (“FDIC”) on proposed modifications to Section 19 to narrow the circumstances under which the FDIC’s written consent is required to hire individuals with minor criminal offenses. Recent revisions to Section 19 have helped ease restrictions but more can be done.
- In 2020, JPMorgan Chase hired more than 2,100 people with criminal backgrounds – about 10 percent of new hires in the US – whose history had no bearing on the requirements of the job they were seeking. And with a workforce of more than 30,000 in New York State, the firm is always in need of top local talent to fill open positions.

¹The Paper Prisons Initiative. <https://paperprisons.org>

² Brennan Center for Justice Report. Poverty and Mass Incarceration in New York



- Last week, JPMorgan Chase joined a group of 30 companies, many that are based in New York, to launch the [Second Chance Business Coalition](#), co-chaired by our Chairman and CEO Jamie Dimon, to expand hiring and advancement practices for people with criminal records within their companies.

If implemented, Clean Slate will help bolster the state's economy by more fully tapping the talents of thousands of people who are currently unemployed or underemployed because of their criminal record. When someone cannot get their foot in the door to compete for a job, it hurts businesses and communities by limiting access to economic opportunity.

The benefits of automatic expungement are clear and we urge the NY State Legislature to pass S1553A / A6399. Thank you for your consideration.

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