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**Measure to Give Californians a
Fair Chance at Employment Approved by Legislature**

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(SACRAMENTO, CA) – The California Legislature today approved AB 1008, the California Fair Chance Act, by Assemblymember Kevin McCarty (D – Sacramento), Assemblymember Shirley Weber (D – San Diego), Assemblymember Chris Holden (D – Pasadena), Assemblymember Mike Gipson (D – Carson), Assemblymember Eloise Gomez Reyes (D – San Bernardino) and Senator Steven Bradford (D – Gardena), which will eliminate employment barriers for individuals formerly convicted of a crime. Historically known as, “Ban the Box,” this bill would prohibit a public or private employer from asking a prospective employee if they have been convicted of a crime on an initial application for employment. The measure was approved by the State Senate on a vote of 27 to 13 and was approved by the State Assembly on a vote of 41 to 25.

“It’s time for California become a leader in fair chance hiring by joining the nine other states that already extend ban the box to private employment,” said Beth Avery, Staff Attorney for the National Employment Law Project. “The Fair Chance Act won’t prevent employers from running background checks or deciding which applicants to hire. But by delaying such checks until later in the hiring process, the law will help ensure that job applicants with records are fairly considered.”

For decades, requiring job applicants to initially disclose their criminal history has been a prejudiced disqualifier for those seeking to enter California’s workforce. With an estimated 1 in 3 Californians having some criminal history, this arbitrary barrier to employment has become one of the leading causes of recidivism.

"One third of California adults—disproportionately people of color—have a conviction or arrest record that can show up on an employment background check, said Dorsey Nunn, Executive Director for Legal Services for Prisoners with Children. “People with records are plagued by hiring discrimination, which locks qualified applicants out of the labor market and undermines our ability to support our families and communities. AB 1008 will Ban the Box and allow people to get a foot in the door to show employers that we’re people with skills and talents, not just a conviction history.”

If AB 1008 is approved by Governor Jerry Brown, California would become the largest state in the nation to ‘ban the box’ and give all workers a fair chance at entering the job market.

“We need to expand job opportunities for all Californians, especially those who have served their time and are looking for a fair chance to enter the workforce,” said Assemblymember Kevin McCarty. “My AB 1008 will eliminate barriers to employment, reduce recidivism and give former offenders an opportunity to demonstrate their ability to become productive, contributing members of our society.”

AB 1008 now heads to Governor Brown for final consideration.

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Kevin McCarty represents California's 7th Assembly District, which include the cities of Sacramento, West Sacramento and unincorporated Sacramento County. McCarty serves as Chair of the Assembly Budget Subcommittee on Education Finance.