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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

HOUSE RESOLUTION

DESIGNATING APRIL OF 2025, TO BE "SECOND CHANCE MONTH" IN THE STATE OF
RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Cruz, Shekarchi, Blazejewski, J. Lombardi, Hull, Biah,
Morales, Potter, Stewart, and Felix

Date Introduced: April 10, 2025

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, The Second Chance Act (SCA), passed in 2008, is the largest source of
2 federal funding established to break incarceration cycles and help people reenter their
3 communities after jail or prison; and

4 WHEREAS, The SCA has fueled significant drops in recidivism and has saved
5 governments money, made and kept neighborhoods safer, and is helping people lead healthy and
6 meaningful lives; and

7 WHEREAS, Second Chance Month (SCM) is a nationally-recognized celebration of
8 second chances, fresh starts, and breaking barriers for people who have been impacted by the
9 legal system; and

10 WHEREAS, Between 70 - 100 million people in the United States have a past arrest or
11 conviction record, which includes arrests that did not lead to convictions, misdemeanors, and
12 felonies, but can create significant barriers to employment, housing, and stability; and

13 WHEREAS, A staggering 94 percent of employers, 90 percent of landlords, and
14 approximately 60 percent of educational institutions, utilize background checks, which often
15 limits opportunities for those persons with records. In addition, over 42,000 state and federal
16 restrictions impose additional obstacles, many affecting essential aspects of life; and

17 WHEREAS, Past arrest or conviction records have resulted in nearly half of all children
18 in the United States currently having at least one parent with a record; and

19 WHEREAS, Millions of people with arrest or conviction records report difficulty getting

1 a job and maintaining employment; They are 50 percent less likely to get a callback, making it
2 difficult to make a living or pay rent or bills, which results in keeping them trapped in joblessness
3 or poverty; and

4 WHEREAS, Support for the sealing of eligible records for people who have remained
5 crime-free for a period of time are:

6 • A person is no more likely to commit an offense after staying crime-free for 4 to 7
7 years than anyone else;

8 • Studies have shown that within one year of having a record sealed, people were 11
9 percent more likely to be employed and saw an over 22 percent increase in income; and

10 • Over 15 million people are currently eligible for full or partial record sealing in the 12
11 states, representing the full political spectrum, that have already enacted legislation to meet
12 sealing of eligible records criteria; and

13 WHEREAS, The purpose and vision of Second Chance Month is to no longer define a
14 person only by their past record, but to provide them with a fair opportunity to work, get an
15 education and a job, and reach their full potential; now, therefore be it

16 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby
17 proclaims April of 2025, to be "Second Chance Month" and reinforces support and commitment
18 to providing second chances; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
20 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Dawn Simas, Board of Directors, The Formerly
21 Incarcerated Union of Rhode Island, Meko Lincoln, Board of Directors, The Formerly
22 Incarcerated Union of Rhode Island, Alexis Morales, Pawtucket Program Director, Project
23 Weber/RENEW, and Alexandria Gonzalez, Director, Gather Together United As1.

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