



**Center for
Employment
Opportunities**

CEO'S POLICY AGENDA

Increase access to high quality jobs.

At CEO, we know that a job can be a powerful tool in preventing a return to incarceration. People of color, particularly women and those with conviction histories, remain overrepresented in the lowest-paid agricultural, domestic, and service vocations.

Achieving our vision of economic mobility requires government investment and incentives to create more high quality jobs for individuals who are coming home from incarceration.

Increase in the federal minimum wage to \$15/hr.

Entry level jobs that are immediately available to individuals who have recently been released from incarceration must pay a living wage, but this can only be achieved by minimum wage standards. Increasing the minimum wage holds all employers to the same standard and will enable people to earn more immediately upon coming home.

Provide financial incentives to businesses that hire individuals coming home from incarceration.

Current Work Opportunity Tax Credits and financial incentives for businesses are underutilized because they are relatively small and bureaucratic for employers.

Create procurement structures at the federal, state and local level

Requiring government contractors and government agencies to hire a certain percentage of workers with a conviction history or who have experienced incarceration would increase job opportunities for individuals coming home from incarceration. There are similar structures in place to incentivize hiring other populations (for example, HUD Section 3 requirements for contractors to hire individuals who live in public housing).

**Change
that works.**
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