



Center for
Employment
Opportunities



June 6, 2022

Assembly Member Reginald Byron Jones-Sawyer Sr, (Chair)
Assembly Member Tom Lackey, (Vice Chair)
1020 N Street (LOB), Room 111
Sacramento, California 95814

Re: SUPPORT FOR CALIFORNIA SENATE BILL 1304 CONCERNING GATE MONEY

Dear Chair Jones-Sawyer and Vice Chair Lackey:

On behalf of the undersigned organizations dedicated to improving lives for formerly incarcerated people, we are grateful to the California Senate for voting unanimously to pass the gate money bill Senate Bill 1304 (SB 1304) and to Senator Sydney Kamlager (D-30) for authoring this legislation.

We want to reemphasize our staunch and unwavering support for SB 1304. As the bill moves to the Assembly and to your committee we urge you to amend the bill back to its original version, requiring \$2,590 be provided to individuals who are leaving incarceration.

Our organizations serve thousands of Californians returning from incarceration throughout the state. They face incomparable challenges returning to their communities. The stigma of being

formerly incarcerated presents immediate obstacles to employment and safe and affordable housing - leaving many people unhoused, unable to access mental health or substance abuse treatment, and unable to afford essential expenses daily transportation, food, clothing, and personal care items or items needed to prepare for employment.

The barriers returning individuals face are not inevitable, they are the result of systemic injustices which deprioritize the rehabilitation and reintegration of formerly incarcerated people.

By addressing head-on the financial troubles of people leaving incarceration, we may be able to accelerate their reintegration and transition to stable employment and reduce recidivism.

We saw from the Returning Citizen Stimulus program that unrestricted cash assistance can significantly support individuals in their employment search and housing stability when they return, expediting their ability to contribute to the state's economy. This work was a part of the Returning Home Well initiative - tapping into the power of nonprofits and philanthropy, we were able to provide more than millions in cash assistance to thousands of individuals who were recently released from incarceration in California - but our work is far from over.

If passed, SB 1304 will increase the provision of gate money for eligible Californians to an amount that will provide support to aid in someone's reentry; it will support the state's existing criminal justice reform efforts as well as our ongoing pursuit of justice and opportunity for all.

Sincerely,

Amity Foundation
Anti-Recidivism Coalition (ARC)
Building Opportunities for Self Sufficiency (BOSS)
Center for Employment Opportunities (CEO)
Chrysalis
Five Keys Schools and Programs
Georgia Horton Ministries
JustIncomeGNV
The Los Angeles Regional Reentry Partnership (LARRP)
New Ways to Work
Root and Rebound
Roots Community Health
Rubicon Programs
TechEquity Collaborative
Third Sector
UCLA National Clinical Scholars Program
Universal Income Project
UpTogether
YBCA