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Governor Christie Holds Summit on Providing Second Chances to Those With Criminal Records

Wednesday, March 8, 2017

Tags: [Jobs and the Economy](#)

JOB ASSISTANCE FOR EX-OFFENDERS: Today, Governor Christie is hosting the Employee Opportunity Summit to encourage New Jersey businesses to assist ex-offenders, some of whom have had drug problems in the past, in fully re-entering the community through employment.

Governor Christie is a strong believer in second chances, which has been the driving force behind many of his policies, including establishing Drug Court, the Recovery Coach program, Ban-the-Box legislation and converting Mid-State Prison into a drug rehabilitation center for inmates. In the Governor's repeated meetings with ex-offenders and people recovering from addiction over the years, a recurring issue they have raised is the need to find employment, which enables them to bring new balance to their lives and complete their transition to productive family members.

To prevent recidivism, to help people conquer addiction, landing a sustainable job is a crucial step we can help them attain.

Flashback Video: Governor Christie: It's Not Enough For Us Just To Change Laws, We've Got To Change Minds Too

Governor Christie: It's Not Enough For Us Just To Change Laws, W..



[Watch The Video Here](#)

CHANGING THE LAW IS JUST ONE STEP TOWARD PROGRESS: During his 2017 State of the State Address, Governor Christie announced he would hold a summit to bring together the people who are trying to walk away from crime and addiction with those willing to help them. Ex-offenders, many overcoming addiction, have told the Governor that more needs to be done to help them find employment, beyond the law that removed the question of a criminal

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record from job applications. Governor Christie said it's not enough to just change laws, we also must change minds – the private and public sector must do their part to hire ex-offenders so they can get back on their feet and become productive members of society.

The Employment Opportunity Summit, taking place 10 a.m. at Thomas Edison State College in Trenton:

Former Governor and Chairman of the NJ Reentry Corporation, Jim McGreevey will open the program.

Speaker: Mark Holden, General Counsel for Koch Industries, known as a bridge builder for his passion in giving ex-offenders second chances. He has worked for criminal justice reform with the hopes of removing obstacles to opportunities for the disadvantaged. Koch Industries has campaigned across the country to get employers to Ban the Box, something we've been doing here in New Jersey since 2014. This practice allows employers to focus on the individual and learn about their criminal backgrounds later in the hiring process. Koch has eliminated criminal record questions from all of its applications and have found the ex-offenders to be more hungry, productive and dedicated workers.

Panels:

Prison to Productivity -- Patrick D'Aiuto, Tariq Love and John Berry, ex-offenders who are transitioning back into the community. Moderated by John Koufos, Executive Director of the NJ Reentry Corporation.

Business Successes -- Andrew Campbell, Eastern Millwork; Rich Leibler, Sansone AutoMall; and Stefan Oberman, AeroFarms -- businesses who have adopted neutral hiring practices and have employed ex-offenders with great success. Moderated by Department of Labor and Workforce Development Acting Commissioner Aaron Fichtner.

Call to Action: Governor Christie

The summit is being held in coordination with Koch Industries, NJ Reentry Corporation, Choose New Jersey, NJBIA, NJ Chamber of Commerce, NJ Restaurant Association, and NJ Gasoline Convenience & Automotive Association.

Press Contact:

Brian Murray
609-777-2600



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Office of the Governor
PO Box 001
Trenton, NJ 08625
609-292-6000