



2/25/2019

Dear Lawmaker:

On behalf of thousands of Americans for Prosperity-West Virginia activists, I urge you to **support HB 2486**, reforming occupational license revocation procedures. **This vote may be recorded in our 2019 session legislative scorecard.**

HB 2486, sponsored by Chairman John Shott, would reduce unjust barriers to opportunity for West Virginians with past convictions by requiring our occupational boards to more fairly decide whether to revoke someone's license based on criminal history.

- Too many West Virginians are excluded from employment because of past mistakes, no matter how relevant they are to the job they wish to perform.
- HB 2486 prohibits licensing boards from using vague "moral turpitude" clauses to exclude people from jobs merely for having a criminal record.
- Under the cronyist status quo, overly broad exclusion criteria is abused to insulate established businesses from competition, harming former offenders' ability to productively reintegrate into society.
- HB 2486 ensures that occupational boards only revoke licenses for crimes that bear a "rational nexus" to licensed occupations.

While AFP-WV supports HB 2486's important reforms, we believe that **the bill would be improved by banning "moral character" requirements in occupational licensing and requiring that disqualifying crimes "directly relate" to licensed occupations.**

- Like anti-"moral turpitude" provisions, "good moral character" requirements are frequently interpreted to exclude people with criminal records from professions, whether their offense relates to the job in question.
- A "directly relates" standard for criminal history will help prevent overly wide interpretations of what crimes have a "rational nexus" to a job. High-stakes West Virginian professions, such as doctors, already use this narrow standard for criminal disqualification already. This approach achieves the legislative intent of the bill.

For these reasons, **I ask you to vote yes in support of HB 2486**, and adopt the recommended changes to make the bill as strong as possible.

Sincerely,

Jason Huffman
West Virginia State Director
Americans for Prosperity