



THE
AMERICAN
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UNION

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Alexandria, VA – The American Conservative Union released a statement today in response to the unanimous passage of the North Carolina ‘Second Chance Act,’ nearly a year after it passed out of the Senate. Led by a strong core of conservative lawmakers including Senator Phil Berger (Lifetime 91% ACU rating), Senator Danny Britt (Lifetime 91% ACU Rating), Senator Warren Daniel (Lifetime 87% ACU rating), along with House Majority whip Jon Hardister (Lifetime 82% ACU rating), the legislation would expand the eligibility of non-violent offenders to clear their public criminal record.

Why does this matter?

As American Conservative Union’s General Counsel, David Safavian, explained, “For most people, having a conviction on their public record is the equivalent of the economic death penalty.” Indeed, studies show that not only is someone with a record much less likely to even be interviewed for a job, but if he/she does obtain employment, there is a 10%-40% reduction in future earnings.

While we undoubtedly believe that those who break the law must be held accountable for their actions, we also understand that not every crime is deserving of lifetime of penalties. “If an individual has served his or her time and demonstrated their commitment to rehabilitation, they should have an opportunity to fully reintegrate back into society,” Safavian continued.

In North Carolina, the courts hand out nearly 100,000 convictions each year. Patrick Plein, a policy analyst with the American Conservative Union noted, “Opening an avenue for expungement would recognize the self-improvement and provide economic empowerment to potentially hundreds of thousands of North Carolinians. In a time when many families are struggling, this is a critical moment to lift people out of poverty into futures of hope and opportunity.”

Even after those who have made mistakes have served their time, the collateral consequences that follow present massive obstacles when searching for meaningful work or a safe place to live. We are proud to stand with legislative leaders in North Carolina today who recognize this fact, and have worked tirelessly to break down these barriers to re-entry.

Establishing a path for those who have made mistakes to get a fresh start, is not only the right moral thing to do, but the safe thing to do.

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