

Proclamation

by Governor Jim Justice

- Whereas,** every person is endowed with human dignity and value; and
- Whereas,** redemption and second chances are American values; and
- Whereas,** an estimated 70 million Americans have a criminal record, with more than 5,000 individuals incarcerated and 3,000 individuals on parole in West Virginia; and
- Whereas,** individuals returning from prison and those who have paid their debt after committing a crime face significant barriers, also known as collateral consequences; and
- Whereas,** individuals with a criminal history often struggle to find housing, employment, or education, regain voting rights, volunteer in their community, and pay for a significant debt that arises as a result of their conviction and incarceration; and
- Whereas,** the number of legal collateral consequences of a criminal conviction exceeds 44,000, with 851 consequences specific to West Virginia, and more than one thousand collateral consequences affecting the high school and higher education of youth in America; and
- Whereas,** these barriers can contribute to recidivism, which increases victimization and decreases public safety; and
- Whereas,** the stigma and legal barriers associated with criminal record result in lost human capital and lost economic output for the United States; and
- Whereas,** the designation of April of Second Chance Month would contribute to increased public awareness about the need for closure for those who have paid their debt, and opportunities for individuals, employers, congregations, and communities to extend second chances.

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that I, Jim Justice, Governor of the Great State of West Virginia, do hereby proclaim *April 2023* as:

Second Chance Month

in the Mountain State and encourage all citizens to join me in this observance.


In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

Done at the Capitol, City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this the Twenty-eighth day of February, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Twenty-Three, and in the One Hundred Sixtieth year of the State.




Jim Justice
Governor

By the Governor:


Mac Warner
Secretary of State