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Conservatives for Criminal Justice Applauds the Passage of the North Carolina Second Chance Act

Today, the North Carolina Legislature took a historic step towards upholding the American promise of second chances and redemption. This promise has continuously been denied in the past for the one in four North Carolinians with criminal records. With the unanimous passage of the Second Chance Act (SB562) by both the Senate and House, more than two million North Carolinians striving to lead productive, law abiding lives but burdened by old criminal records, will see relief.

The bipartisan support for this legislation is an incredible moment of collaboration during these difficult and uncertain times. We are grateful for the leadership of Senators Britt, Daniels, and McKissick who have fought for this legislation for over a year as well as that of House Sponsors Rep. Hardister, Clemmons, Morey and Grange for their efforts to finally see the important reform across the finish line.

As we all struggle towards a new normal in the midst of the current health crisis, individuals with criminal records are facing even more difficulty finding employment and housing. With the passage of the Second Chance Act, many of these individuals will have the opportunity to expunge multiple non-violent misdemeanors and a low-level non-violent felony in an effort to reduce the barriers they face while trying to become contributing members of society. The Second Chance Act helps ensure that these individuals are not forgotten during the efforts to rebuild after the economic destruction COVID19 has caused over the past several months.

As our state and nation face unprecedented challenges, the North Carolina Second Chance Act represents a refreshing moment where state leaders across the political landscape have come together to acknowledge that individuals should not be punished for the rest of their lives for crimes they have already served their time for. We are proud to be part of a broad, bipartisan coalition of organizations supporting this policy.