

ASSEMBLY THIRD READING
ACR 176 (Elhawary)
As Introduced April 15, 2026
Majority vote

SUMMARY

Proclaims the month of April 2026 as Second Chance Month in California.

Major Provisions

- 1) Redemption and second chances are values of California. Restorative justice through healing and rehabilitation can help uplift society.
- 2) An estimated eight million residents of California have a criminal record. About 35,000 Californians return to their communities from prison every year. Individuals returning from prison or jail have paid their debt for committing crimes but still face significant legal and societal barriers.
- 3) For individuals returning to their communities from prison or jail, gaining meaningful employment is one of the most significant predictors of successful reentry and has been shown to reduce future criminal activity.
- 4) Many individuals who have been incarcerated struggle to find employment and access capital to start a small business because of collateral consequences, which are sometimes not directly related to the offenses the individuals committed or any proven public safety benefit.
- 5) In addition to employment, education has also been shown to be a significant predictor of successful reentry for individuals returning from prison. An individual who has been convicted of certain crimes is often barred from receiving the financial aid necessary to acquire additional skills and knowledge through some formal education programs.
- 6) An individual with a criminal record faces significant barriers in securing a place to live and is often barred from seeking access to public housing.
- 7) Individuals returning from prison or jail often contribute to their communities by providing peer support services, helping prevent others from entering into the carceral system. They often engage in advocacy and become involved in criminal justice reform, using their experience to shape more effective policy.
- 8) The designation of April 2026 as Second Chance Month may contribute to increased public awareness about the impact of collateral consequences and the need for closure for individuals with a criminal record who have paid their debt.
- 9) Second Chance Month may also contribute to increased public awareness about opportunities for individuals, employers, congregations, and communities to extend second chances to individuals with a criminal record.

COMMENTS

According to the Author

We must build up, rather than tear down, those who have been system-impacted. We must increase public awareness surrounding the importance of expanding access to educational and employment opportunities for these individuals. In doing so, we will make it easier for those who have been system-impacted to contribute to their communities.

Arguments in Support

None on file

Arguments in Opposition

None on file

FISCAL COMMENTS

No fiscal impact. This resolution is keyed non-fiscal by Legislative Counsel.

VOTES

ASM RULES: 8-0-2

YES: Pacheco, Ahrens, Dixon, Garcia, Mark González, Irwin, Michelle Rodriguez, Sanchez

ABS, ABST OR NV: Lackey, Zbur

UPDATED

VERSION: April 15, 2026

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