



Senate of Pennsylvania

Senator Anthony H. Williams

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DATE: March 29, 2011

TO: All Senators

FROM: Senator Anthony H. Williams

SUBJECT: Co-sponsorship of legislation: **Criminal Background Checks**

In the near future I will be introducing legislation to address employer criminal background checks. This legislation would require employers seeking a criminal background check on a resident of this Commonwealth to obtain the background check from the Pennsylvania State Police.

In lieu of performing in-house screening or seeking criminal background checks from local, state and federal agencies, many employers have outsourced this duty to outside companies and internet data brokers. Outside private companies and internet data brokers operate in an unregulated, nontransparent industry. The information provided on the background checks is gathered by humans, and is often out-dated (in violation of federal law) or altogether erroneous. There is no way for employers to determine whether the information provided in these criminal background checks is accurate, nor do they have to verify any of the information contained therein with the potential or current employee. Consequently, potential and current employees often lose job opportunities or are fired due to erroneous criminal charges found in an inaccurate background check, which they had no warning of or chance to correct. Moreover, employers and employees suffer the consequences, as the outside companies are not held accountable for errors later found within a criminal background check. In such troubling economic times, we must not allow our residents to suffer the damage from such unaccountable misinformation.

If you wish to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Shannon A. Sargent, Esq., at 787-5970 or email ssargent@pasenate.com. Thank you for your consideration.