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## For Immediate Release

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## **Governor Brown signs landmark legislation to remove barriers to licensing and decrease recidivism**

**Sacramento, CA (OCTOBER 3, 2018)** —This past weekend, Governor Edmund “Jerry” Brown signed AB 2138, authored by Assemblymembers David Chiu and Evan Low, to remove barriers for occupational licensing for close to 8 million Californians living with criminal records.

AB 2138 was supported by a coalition of 50+ organizations, including REDF, East Bay Community Law Center (EBCLC), Root & Rebound, Legal Services for Prisoners with Children (LSPC), All of Us or None, Anti-Recidivism Coalition, Alameda County Public Defender, PolicyLink, the Alliance for Boys & Men of Color, the National Association of Social Workers, and many more.

AB 2138 opens pathways to family-sustaining careers to millions of Californians who have past justice system contact. The bill ensures that close to 40 licensing boards governed under the Department of Consumer Affairs cannot deny people otherwise trained and qualified for licenses due to irrelevant and dismissed convictions. Specifically, the bill creates a seven-year “washout” period after which licensing agencies cannot consider crimes that are not serious felonies, sex offenses, or relevant financial crimes. It also eliminates requirements that applicants self-disclose the details of their record prior to issuance of a California Department of Justice background check, freeing applicants from disclosing from memory alone and refocusing agencies on the facts of an applicant’s record. AB 2138 also sets out criteria for considering an applicant’s rehabilitation and bans the use of dismissed and sealed convictions, convictions for which a person received a Certificate of Rehabilitation, and non-conviction acts such as arrests that never led to conviction to deny licensure.

Studies have shown that states with more fair processes for occupational licensing have dramatically lower recidivism rates.

Many Californians are denied licenses to work in jobs they are qualified to perform due to old or irrelevant criminal records. In some cases, people are denied licenses for jobs they have performed successfully for years in the past without incident or were trained to do while incarcerated, simply because of a conviction for a minor offense unrelated to their job.

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With AB 2138, Californians with criminal records will be able to access licenses for close to 40 occupations they were previously barred from or very unlikely to receive. Covered occupations range from automotive repair to psychology to cosmetology.

The signing of AB 2138 is a huge victory for all Californians.

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## **ABOUT REDF**

REDF (the Roberts Enterprise Development Fund) is a pioneering venture philanthropy that creates jobs and transforms lives like no other organization in America. We are galvanizing a national movement of employment social enterprises – revenue-generating businesses that invest the money they make into helping people striving to overcome employment barriers get jobs, keep jobs, and build a better life. For more information, visit [www.redf.org](http://www.redf.org)