

# Commonwealth of Pennsylvania



## Governor's Office

### PROCLAMATION

#### SECOND CHANCE MONTH

April 2019

*WHEREAS, in the land of the free, a criminal record should not mean a lifetime disqualification from the opportunity to build a better life after a mistake, for oneself and one's family; and*

*WHEREAS, an estimated 70 million Americans have a criminal record, with 49,280 individuals incarcerated and 41,305 individuals are on probation and parole in Pennsylvania; and*

*WHEREAS, individuals returning from prison and those who have paid their debt after committing 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 significant debt that arises as a result of their conviction and incarceration; and*

*WHEREAS, the Council of State Governments reports that the number of legal collateral consequences of a criminal conviction exceeds 44,000, with 850 consequences specific to Pennsylvania; and*

*WHEREAS, these barriers can contribute to recidivism, which increases victimization and decreases public safety; and*

*WHEREAS, the stigma and legal barriers associated with a criminal record results in lost human capital and lost economic output for the United States; and*

*WHEREAS, Pennsylvania is leading the nation with a steady advancement of bipartisan criminal justice reforms focused on removing barriers that prevent advancement in the workforce: creating the nation's first Clean Slate law; creating a fair-chance hiring policy for state government; and eliminating driver's license suspensions for non-driving infractions; all while seeing consecutive annual decreases in our prison population and a drop in crime.*

*THEREFORE, I, Tom Wolf, Governor of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, do hereby proclaim April 2019, as SECOND CHANCE MONTH. This designation contributes 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.*

*GIVEN under my hand and the Seal of the Governor, at the City of Harrisburg, this twentieth day of March two thousand nineteen, the year of the commonwealth the two hundred forty-third.*



*Tom Wolf*  
TOM WOLF  
Governor