

Testimony

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I would like to commend Senator Williams and his colleagues for thinking about the important issue of accurate criminal background checks. All such information must be correct to ensure that workers and job-seekers are treated fairly.

We know that instead of performing their own screening or seeking criminal background checks from local, state and federal agencies, some employers choose to contract out this duty to other companies and internet data brokers. Outside private companies and internet data brokers operate in an unregulated industry. Unfortunately the information provided by these background checks may on occasion be 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 that it is accurate with the potential or current employee. Consequently, individuals may lose job opportunities or be fired because of erroneous criminal charges found in an inaccurate background check, which they had no warning of or chance to correct.

Responses to this problem, such as Senate Bill 1039, are to be applauded for making efforts at fairness, accuracy, and timeliness in the vital area of criminal background checks. We

can all agree that the Pennsylvania State Police will be absolutely accurate, scrupulous, and fair in responding to the requests from businesses for criminal background checks.

Thank you for the opportunity to present my thoughts on this bill.