



SENATE RESOLUTION 26-007

BY SENATOR(S) Marchman, Amabile, Baisley, Ball, Benavidez, Bridges, Bright, Carson, Cutter, Danielson, Daugherty, Exum, Frizell, Gonzales J., Hinrichsen, Jodeh, Kipp, Kirkmeyer, Kolker, Lindstedt, Liston, Mullica, Pelton B., Pelton R., Rich, Roberts, Rodriguez, Simpson, Snyder, Sullivan, Wallace, Weissman, Zamora Wilson, Coleman.

CONCERNING DESIGNATING APRIL 2026 AS SECOND CHANCE MONTH.

WHEREAS, Approximately 77 million American citizens possess a criminal record; and

WHEREAS, Between incarceration, parole, probation, and youth services, there are roughly 100,000 individuals in Colorado alone who are under the supervision of the state's Department of Corrections; and

WHEREAS, Over 95% of the individuals in Colorado's state prisons are ultimately released and return to their communities, with an estimated 6,000 individuals released annually; this number is equivalent to 20% of the number of new entrants to Colorado's workforce each year; and

WHEREAS, Individuals with a criminal record, however, often face a "second prison" in the form of "collateral consequences", which are the legal and regulatory restrictions, non-court-imposed penalties, and significant social barriers that result from a conviction; and

WHEREAS, One of the most impactful collateral consequences, the enhanced difficulty in finding gainful employment, inhibits the economic mobility of people with a criminal record, which has severe negative impacts on the well-being of their children and families for generations; and

WHEREAS, Other collateral consequences include ineligibility for certain public benefits and housing; limited access to education and professional licensure and certification; and a restricted ability to volunteer, vote, and engage in other forms of civic participation; and

WHEREAS, Many collateral consequences are mandatory, automatic, and indefinite, taking effect regardless of the lack of any proven public safety benefit and without any consideration toward the seriousness of an offense, the time passed since the offense, or an individual's efforts to make amends and earn back the public's trust; and

WHEREAS, Collateral consequences contribute to recidivism; increase victimization; decrease public safety; result in lost economic output for Colorado and the United States; and limit opportunities for individuals with a criminal record to honor their second chance, contribute to their community, and help others in their situation, as many choose to do; and

WHEREAS, For example, Charles Colson, who was convicted of Watergate-related crimes, dedicated his second chance following his incarceration to founding Prison Fellowship, the nation's largest Christian-faith-based nonprofit for prisoners, former prisoners, and their families, which has the mission of advocating for criminal justice reforms that "validate victims, help transform those responsible for crime, and create safer communities"; and

WHEREAS, Redemption and second chances are long-standing American values, as is the principle that every individual is endowed with human dignity and deserving of respect; and

WHEREAS, Designating April 2026 as Second Chance Month will increase public awareness of the need to help provide second chances for those with criminal records so that they may achieve closure, embrace hope, and pursue a brighter future; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventy-fifth General Assembly of the State of Colorado:

That we, the members of the Colorado Senate:

(1) Designate April 2026 as Second Chance Month;

(2) Honor the work of communities, governmental institutions, nonprofits, congregations, employers, and individuals in removing the unnecessary collateral consequences that impede individuals with a criminal record from becoming productive members of society; and

(3) Call upon the citizens of Colorado to observe Second Chance Month through actions and programs that promote awareness of the "second prison" and provide second chances for those who have paid their debt.

Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Senate Resolution be sent to Donald Trump, President of the United States; JD Vance, Vice President of the United States; Todd Blanche, Acting Attorney General of the United States; Jared Polis, Governor of Colorado; Dianne Primavera, Lieutenant Governor of Colorado; Andre Stancil, Executive Director of the Colorado Department of Corrections; Katie Ruske, Manager of the Office of Community Corrections in the Colorado Department of Public Safety's Division of Criminal Justice; Prison Fellowship; the Second Chance Center; and the members of Colorado's Congressional delegation.

James Rashad Coleman Sr.
PRESIDENT OF
THE SENATE

Esther van Mourik
SECRETARY OF
THE SENATE