



August 11, 2006

Mr. Robert Ulrich  
Chairman & CEO  
Target Corporation  
Mailstop TFS 1A-X  
P.O. Box 9350  
Minneapolis, MN 55440

Dear Mr. Ulrich,

Last week in the Chicago Tribune, Target's senior real estate group manager, Chris Case, stated that unless Mayor Daley vetoed the city's new living wage ordinance, Target would put on hold the development of a store scheduled to be built on a long-vacant South Side site. Among the reasons given, Case took particular exception to a requirement that employers not discriminate against "ex-offenders" when making hiring decisions. As organizations dedicated to increasing public safety by promoting access to employment opportunities for people with criminal records, we are particularly dismayed to see that the Target Corporation has chosen to take this regressive stance with regard to jobseekers with criminal records.

On its website, Target asserts its commitment to diversity, and to "making our communities better places to live." Target surely realizes that the same communities targeted for building their stores, the sites that are delivered with attractive tax abatements and other financial incentives, have for years been ignored by business, under-resourced and plagued by crime. Target's commitment to building stores where they can turn a profit should be coupled with consistent good-faith efforts to hire and contract with people who are representative of the neighborhood where they plan to build. Target is the first to admit that their most successful store in the country is in Chicago's Lincoln Park. Let's not ignore the fact that the people who live in urban markets like Chicago face systemic barriers – among them lack of living wage employment opportunities as well as dismally disproportionate rates of arrest and incarceration – that can only be addressed through proactive measures to help them reenter the mainstream and the job market.

In early 2006, Mayor Daley announced several bold "reentry" initiatives, including reform of the City's hiring policies relative to the consideration of jobseekers with criminal records. The Mayor's new hiring policy requires the City to "balance the nature and severity of the crime with other factors, such as the passage of time and evidence of rehabilitation." The Mayor added, "Implementing this new policy won't be easy, but it's the right thing to do... We cannot ask private employers to consider hiring former prisoners unless the City practices what it preaches."

The mayor was responding to the fact that people of color from low-income areas of Chicago and its suburbs were disproportionately impacted by the criminal justice system and thereby barred from a number of jobs based solely on their criminal record. Mayor Daley's new policies were implemented as a way to create individualized assessments, facilitating people's return to the labor market without compromising public safety. For the first time, the City of Chicago now requires all agencies to take into account the age of an individual's criminal record, the seriousness of the offense, evidence of rehabilitation, and other mitigating factors before making their hiring decisions. Indeed, no one is asking Target to put a person with a recent conviction for robbery behind a cash register, but Target

should follow the lead taken by the City of Chicago and adopt a smart, balanced hiring policy for considering applicants with a history of criminal justice involvement.

The idea of getting people with criminal records back to work in order to reduce recidivism has been embraced by the city of Chicago as a step in the right direction. Local legislators who helped draft and are in support of the retail living wage ordinance should be praised for including this population of jobseekers who often face insurmountable barriers to reentry into the workforce. The undersigned organizations urge Target to support Chicago's working families and increase public safety by reconsidering their decision to halt building of their new store, and by committing to pay living wages to all qualified workers.

Sincerely,

Glenn E. Martin, Co-Director, *National H.I.R.E. Network*

Paulette Barras, Chairman, *F. A. I. L. (Friends & Families of Alcoholics & Addicted Incarcerated in Louisiana)*

Melody L. Beattie, President, *Melody & Company Inc.*

Jason V. Berry, Owner, *4 Sale by Photo, LLC*

Dan Braccio, Program Director, CO-OP Center, *The Council of Churches of Greater Bridgeport, Inc.*

Douglas W. Burris, Chief U.S. Probation Officer, *Eastern District of Missouri*

Dan Cain, CEO/President, *RS Eden*

Shirley Carrington, Acting Executive Director, *Boston Connects Inc.*

Kimetta Coleman, General Partner, *Vision From The Inside Consulting Firm, LLP*

Yvonne Cooks, Director, *California Coalition for Women Prisoners*

Frederick A. Davie, President, *Public/Private Ventures*

Regina K. Dozier, New Orleans, Louisiana

Lili-An Elkins, President, *LAE Consulting*

Sylvia A. Gibbs, Executive Director, *ORCA (Offender Reentry and Community Assistance, Inc.)*

Cheyenne Harty, Gainesville, Florida

Mark Edward Hayden, CEO, *massive communication media™*

Norris Henderson, CEO, *V.O.T.E. (Voice of the Ex-Offender)*

Bruce Herman, Executive Director, *National Employment Law Project*

Carolyn Hood, Director, Ex-Offenders Community Reconstruction/Re-entry Program, *Faith Deliverance Assembly Church*

A. Stephen Lanza, Executive Director, *Family ReEntry*

Alan MacKenzie, Co-Owner, *Street Smart Ventures LLC*

Patrick McAuliffe, CEO, *Connecticut Renaissance Inc.*

Rita McLennon, Executive Director, *Sargent Shriver National Center on Poverty Law*

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Donnell Turner, President/CEO, *The Bridge of Success Career Center & Ministries*  
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Rev. Patricia Watkins, Convener, *Developing Justice Coalition*  
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