



June 27, 2024

Honorable Mark E. Green, MD
Chairman, House Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20515

Honorable Bennie Thompson
Ranking Member, House Committee on Homeland Security
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Green and Ranking Member Thompson:

I write to you in support of the sound policies of H.R. 7223, the *TWIC Efficiency Act*, also known as the *TWICE Act*. This bipartisan bill, led by Congressmen Clay Higgins and Troy Carter, will improve access to the Transportation Worker Identification Credential (TWIC) program by helping incarcerated individuals apply for TWIC cards in advance of leaving federal, state, or local prisons. This expedited application and appeals process will help place eligible employees in jobs, which in turn, improves workforce efforts and assists with successful reentry.

The criminal justice system must protect public safety. And with 95% of all incarcerated individuals eventually released back into our communities, the system also has a responsibility to ensure they successfully reenter society and lead a life free of crime. Data indicate that gainful employment is strongly connected to successful reentry and crime prevention.¹ Simply put, an ex-offender's ability to obtain employment is key to his or her transitioning from being a tax burden to being a taxpayer.

The *TWICE Act* strikes the necessary balance of prioritizing public safety with a common-sense policy that offers a pathway to gainful employment by requiring the Transportation Security Administration (TSA) to develop guidelines to improve returning citizens' access to TWIC programs and to pre-apply for TWIC cards. TWIC cards are often required for employment in high-demand professions in port, oil, and gas industries.

Currently, before issuing a TWIC card, the TSA conducts a security threat assessment to determine eligibility. Applicants with criminal records, depending on the offense, are temporarily or permanently disqualified from the TWIC program, with an option for the eligibility determinations to be waived and appealed. However, under current law, an individual cannot apply for a TWIC card until he or she is released from custody. The application, waiver, and appeals process can be lengthy, which delays an individual's ability to start working.

¹ <https://rightoncrime.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/2023-Employer-Handbook-update.pdf>

The language of the *TWICE Act* is narrow and does not expand the list of eligible offenses for the TWIC program. H.R. 7223 focuses on the premise that applying for a TWIC card and beginning the appeal and waiver process prior to a person's release from prison may increase the chances of employment and decrease the chances of recidivism after release.

This specific and tailored bill is a common-sense measure to improve reentry outcomes and support workforce efforts in high-demand jobs. I am pleased to support the policies of the *TWICE Act* and urge this committee to advance this legislation.

Sincerely,

Brett Tolman
Executive Director
Right on Crime

Cc: Hon. Carlos Gimenez
Chairman, Subcommittee on Transportation and Maritime Security

Hon. Shri Thanedar
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Transportation and Maritime Security