

BAN THE BOX IN HIGHER EDUCATION

A How-To-Guide



Contact Noel Vest for more information.

Why Ban the Box (BtB) in Higher Ed?

Quite simply because we believe that everyone should have access to higher education in the US, regardless of their criminal history. Public tax dollars fund higher education and we feel that public colleges and universities should honor the commitment they have with taxpayers to equitably provide an education to all residents of their state.

Is this a University? State? Or Federal Issue?

All the above. BtB in Higher Education has been advocated for at each of these levels. We have found that these efforts generally build upon each other and make the next step in the movement that much easier. State lawmakers generally follow the lead of the major universities in their states. If we can build enough states that have passed the legislation, then the efforts on the federal side become that much easier. This training is geared towards state level advocacy, but the information can easily be tailored to university or federal advocacy.

Those closest to the problem are closest to the solution

Glenn Martin famously said that “Those closest to the problems are also closest to the solutions, but furthest from the resources and power”. We believe that any advocacy efforts should be grounded in lived experience and led by formerly incarcerated individuals. We want to maintain this core principle in all the work we do.

Unlock Higher Ed wants to help you find your voice

There is nobody better than you that understands the issues and problems specific to your state. We understand and value your expertise on these issues. Unlock Higher Ed wants to help embolden you to create, testify on, and advocate for BtB legislation in your state. We are a group of formerly incarcerated scholars and allies that have been involved in passing BtB in Higher Ed legislation in our home states. We hope to provide resources and expertise so that your state can become the next to ban the box on college applications.

2019 BTB States:
(Total= 19 new/pending bills, 3 amendments)

Region: East Coast→ Contact P2P

New/Pending Bills

- Virginia: [House Bill 2471](#)
- North Carolina
- Maine
- Pennsylvania
- New York: [Senate Bill 809](#)

Amendments

- Maryland: [SB0767](#) (Remove language to allow for the common app);

Region: South→ Contact OR

New/Pending Bills

- Georgia
- Tennessee
- South Carolina
- Kentucky

Amendments

- Louisiana: (Include Private colleges)

Region: West Coast→ Contact Noel Vest

New/Pending Bills

- Colorado: [SB19-170](#)
- Oregon
- Utah
- Arizona
- California

Amendments

- Washington: (Include Private colleges)

Region: Midwest → Contact Zaria Davis

New/Pending Bills

- Michigan
- Illinois: [HB 0217](#)
- Arkansas
- Missouri
- Ohio