Editorial: Calif. helping workers with rap sheets

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The California Legislature passed a bill last month that bars government agencies from asking job applicants about criminal convictions until the agency has determined that the applicant meets minimum qualifications for the job.

This measure will help remove unfair barriers to employment that keep millions of qualified workers trapped at the margins of society. Gov. Jerry Brown should sign this sensible bill.

About 65 million Americans have criminal records that place them at risk of being shut out of work, often for minor convictions that occurred in the distant past or even for arrests that never led to conviction.

In addition, many people are shut out of jobs because of mistakes in criminal background databases that, even under the best circumstances, are difficult to get corrected.

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