

URL: <https://stvp.stanford.edu/clips/building-a-gap-closing-business>

How can technology close opportunity gaps? Social scientist and Kapor Capital partner Freada Kapor Klein points to Phaedra Ellis-Lamkins and her company Promise, which is creating digital tools to simplify and improve the criminal justice system, including alternatives to cash bail.



## Transcript

- [Narrator] That's Phaedra, on the left, Ellis-Lamkins, CEO of Promise.. Was a YC company.. We were her first investor.. She is looking at alternatives to cash bail.. It's a very prevalent issue in our criminal justice system debate right now.. That's an issue.. Criminal justice reform is a bipartisan issue.. A majority of Democrats and Republicans are supporting massive criminal justice reform, including alternatives to cash bail.. The overwhelming majority, north of 70%, of people who are sitting in county jails are there because they have not yet been arraigned and they couldn't afford bail.. So what happens while they're sitting there for a couple weeks? They lose their jobs..

If you lose your job, you're not paying your rent.. You lose your home, you lose your kids.. And a significant number are there for unpaid parking tickets.. They are just these systemic ways in this society that just are these snowball effects.. So, Promise is working on many things.. Bringing some efficiency to the criminal justice system, interjecting some tech in there.. What she's found traveling around the country, talking to places right here in California.. Criminal justice system uses FileMaker Pro.. I don't know if any of you even remember Filemaker Pro.. People are sitting in there waiting for their drug test results..

[Narrator] And they can be waiting for a couple of weeks because the systems don't talk to each other.. And somebody has to get the drug test result back on a piece of paper and they have to reinput it and then they print it out and then they fax it to the jail.. All of this could be done, of course, instantaneously.. It could save tax payers billions of dollars and most importantly, it could save lives.. It could save livelihoods.. It could save families.. So that's what Promise, that's what Phaedra is all about...