



House Judiciary Committee

February 14, 2023

House Bill 97

Criminal Procedure - Expungement of Records - Waiting Periods

Support

NCADD-Maryland strongly supports House Bill 97. NCADD-Maryland has long advocated for policies that help people involved with the criminal justice system avoid some of the unintended collateral damage caused by our drug policies. When people who struggle with substance use disorders get treatment and start the recovery process, criminal records are often huge barriers to success. Obtaining employment and housing is difficult, and sometimes impossible. Without a place to live or a reliable income, some people are much more likely to re-offend and/or return to alcohol and drug use.

House Bill 97 will have a significant impact on increasing access to employment and housing services. Currently, a person has to wait 10 to 15 years after they have completed their sentence – including parole or probation – before they can apply for expungement. This creates an unnecessary barrier for people who are trying to get their lives in order.

These kinds of policy changes are a necessary component to significantly improving our communities. When people have served their time, they should have the opportunities and supports needed to ensure they are able maintain productive lives and livelihoods with their families. Removing some of the barriers to success will also help people with substance use disorders maintain their recovery.

We urge your support of House Bill 97.

The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.