



TESTIMONY FOR SB0011

Partial Expungement and Maryland Judiciary Case Search

Bill Sponsor: Senator Carter

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Aileen Alex, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0011 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists, and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

SB0011 builds on the REDEEM Act of 2023. The REDEEM Act reduces the waiting period for non-violent convictions' expungements. It cuts wait times from ten years to five for eligible misdemeanors. However, Maryland's "unit rule" prohibits expungement of eligible charges if all charges within a unit are not eligible for expungement. SB0011 offers partial expungement for eligible offenses even if another charge arising out of the same incident, transaction, or set of facts is not eligible for expungement.

For the convicted individual, partial expungement offers better chances for housing, education, and employment. This, in turn, reduces the impact on families and children who stand to benefit from a more successful reentry of the former offender.

For the state, SB0011 reduces the impact of discrimination in our criminal justice system that results in multiple and harsher sentences that appear to be race related. In addition, a successful reentry aids in keeping an individual from becoming a repeat offender. Thus, a more successful reentry could mean avoided costs associated with re-incarceration and the support families would need who were financially dependent on this individual.

The Maryland Legislative Coalition continues to advocate for this and similar bills that increase chances for a successful reentry for former offenders and chip away at the injustice evidenced in our incarceration rates.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.