



THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

**Testimony of Senator Jill P. Carter
In Favor of SB0454– Criminal Procedure - Expungement - Completion
of Sentence
Before the Judicial Proceedings Committee
On February 9th 2024**

Mr. Chairman, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Senate Bill 454 authorizes the filing of a petition after a specific amount of time following the completion of the sentence, is a crucial step towards fostering rehabilitation and reintegration of individuals who have served their sentences.

The current legal framework often imposes lengthy waiting periods before individuals are eligible to file petitions for expungement, hindering their ability to fully participate in society. By allowing individuals to submit expungement petitions after completing their sentences, we promote a more just and rehabilitative approach to criminal justice.

One of the primary objectives of SB454 is to recognize the efforts and commitment of individuals who have successfully completed their sentences and demonstrated a genuine commitment to rehabilitation. Waiting periods that extend beyond the completion of a sentence may disproportionately impact individuals seeking a fresh start, hindering their ability to secure employment, housing, and other essential elements of a productive and law-abiding life.

Moreover, research consistently shows that providing a path to expungement contributes to reducing recidivism rates. By removing barriers to employment and housing, individuals with criminal records are more likely to reintegrate into society successfully. This not only benefits the individuals involved but also contributes to the overall safety and well-being of our communities.

In addition to the personal and societal benefits, SB454 aligns with the evolving understanding of criminal justice as a system that prioritizes rehabilitation and second chances. It strikes a balance between accountability for past actions and the recognition of individuals' potential for positive change.

In conclusion, SB454 reflect a compassionate and forward-thinking approach to criminal justice that prioritizes rehabilitation, reduces recidivism, and supports individuals in their efforts to rebuild their lives.

Thank you for considering my testimony, and I urge you to support the positive impact SB454 can have on the lives of individuals seeking a second chance.

Respectfully,

Senator Jill P. Carter