



## Written Testimony to the Judicial Proceedings Committee

### SB.602/HB.658 - Criminal Procedure – Automated Expungement, Waiting Periods, and Adverse Actions (Clean Slate Act of 2024)

#### Sponsors:

Senators McKay, Muse, Sydnor, Smith, Kelly, Waldstreicher, West, and Carter

February 21, 2024

#### Position: Support

Dear Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

On behalf of the Greater Baltimore Committee (GBC), I write to you in support of SB.602/HB.658, Clean Slate Maryland. These bills are an essential step toward providing second chances for thousands of Marylanders, improving our economy, and strengthening communities across the Old Line State.

Since 1955, GBC has been the leading voice for the private sector in the Baltimore region, providing insightful economic and civic leadership to drive collective impact. As we work towards fostering economic equity in the region, we recognize the need to uplift communities across the state to build a stronger and more inclusive Maryland for all.

Clean Slate will do just that. Automatically clearing old criminal records is essential for Maryland's growing economy—especially amid ongoing labor shortages. Even decades-old criminal records can present barriers to finding meaningful employment, keeping hardworking and deserving Marylanders out of the labor market. With an estimated 410,000 individuals across the state currently eligible to have their records cleared, Clean Slate would dramatically expand the labor force and support businesses from Baltimore to Bethesda.

The impact on the economy can hardly be overstated. The United States loses more than \$80 billion in GDP each year due to the underemployment of people with criminal records. A study in Michigan found that automatic record clearing for those eligible increases wages by 22% within the first year, putting more money back into the pockets of consumers and creating a stronger economy. By clearing old criminal records, we can make Maryland more prosperous for years to come.

At GBC, we believe in working towards a more just and inclusive future for Baltimore. That means giving our neighbors the second chances they deserve. I commend the sponsors of these essential bills for their work to strengthen Maryland's economy and communities. I urge the Committee to pass this important legislation for the people of Maryland.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jennifer S. Vey".

Jennifer S. Vey  
Executive Vice President for Policy and Research  
Greater Baltimore Committee

**GREATER BALTIMORE COMMITTEE**

111 South Calvert Street • Suite 1700 • Baltimore, Maryland • 21202-6180

(410) 727-2820 • [www.gbc.org](http://www.gbc.org)