



Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

February 9, 2024

Senate Bill 454

Criminal Procedure - Expungement - Completion of Sentence

Support

NCADD-Maryland supports Senate Bill 454. 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.

In 2022, the Court of Special Appeals ruled that any probation violation means a conviction is indefinitely ineligible for expungement under a legal interpretation that a violation means that the individual has not “satisfactorily completed the sentence” (regardless of the nature of the violation). Senate Bill 454 seeks to clarify that expungements are to be allowed when the time allotted for the sentence has expired, including mandatory supervision and the waiting period.

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 Senate Bill 454.

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.