

SB 1030/HB 0523 "Expungement of Records for Good Cause" Testimony
March 5, 2024 at 1:00 p.m.

Chairman, Vice Chairman and Members of the Committee:

Thank you very much, I appreciate the opportunity to provide testimony on this important issue. My name is Jacob Martz, I am the Vice Mayor of Sharpsburg, Maryland, and though I am not providing this testimony in that capacity today I would like to convey my strongest support and endorsement for this bill, which would authorize an expungement after a showing of good cause.

This is an issue that transcends political boundaries, and despite what some may think, this is not reflection of whether or not you are tough on crime, or about punishing criminals, because crime prevention is not in the scope of what this legislation provides for. What it does provide for is the creation of a discretion-based framework for relief from the long-term effects of a conviction, which is predicated on a case-by-case assessment by a competent legal authority that does not in any way compromise safety or undermine the objectives of our judicial process.

I have a degree in Cybersecurity. The way that we ensure the integrity of a system is through risk assessments to identify and eliminate vulnerabilities before they become an issue. This bill would provide for exactly the type of risk-based assessment that is commonplace in almost any industry, and ensure that those safeguards are in place to prevent the creation of a loophole that would allow dangerous offenders to slip through the cracks, while still providing an avenue for those deserving of it to receive an expungement.

I mentioned earlier that I have a degree in cybersecurity, however the misdemeanor I have on my record from when I was 21 years old, to this day, over two

decades later, still prevents me from obtaining a job in that field; and there are many people out there with similar stories who have more than paid whatever debt they owe to society.

We have to remember - and this is especially true in the case of misdemeanors and records for offenses that are decades old - that not everyone who has a criminal record is truly a criminal or a bad person, nor is every offense an inherently evil act, and those are the people who would benefit from this, not repeat violent felons who pose a threat to society.

For many, this would be a pathway to redemption and an incentive for success that brings the process of reform and justice full circle to a conclusion in a fashion that benefits everyone. Its just common sense, and it's the right thing to do.

Again, I strongly support this legislation, and highly recommend that this esteemed committee issue a favorable report.

Thank you very much for your time.

Regards,

Jacob Martz
Vice Mayor
Sharpsburg, MD