

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 876:

Criminal Procedure – Expungement of Records – Good Cause

TO: Hon. Luke Clippinger, Chair, and Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Art Clunk

DATE: March 5th, 2024

My name is Art Clunk; I am a resident of District 11 and passionately support House Bill 876 for my son.

Two years ago, my son, who works for the Anne Arundel County Fire Department, went out to dinner with his best friends to celebrate the announcement of his engagement with his girlfriend. On his drive home, after two drinks, he was pulled over by law enforcement and received a DWI. He called me and my wife utterly appalled at this situation and took full responsibility for his actions. I thought he could move on from this, only to discover that his charge is not eligible for expungement.

At the time, my son had been working in the department for over 5 years, and this charge put his work at risk. The Chief pulled him from his assignment and allowed my son to work as an EMT or answer phones since he was no longer allowed to drive until his case was settled. I am grateful he has a stellar reputation, or his team may not have been so lenient.

He was given a PBJ with two years probation at the trial, which he completed without hesitation. He lost 96 hours of pay and had to get tested for drugs and alcohol for around 90 days. His chief pushed him to go back to school to be a paramedic, which he had just graduated from last June. He is now a full-fledged national paramedic aiming to become a lieutenant soon.

I support this bill to allow my son to overcome this mistake. It should not be held against him for the rest of his life. I know that multiple bills are considering a fix to this, and I support them all. Whether it is the 10-year waiting period with a 5-year shield or Good Cause Expungement, either would do wonders for my family. We have all enjoyed fine wine in our younger years, and no one should have to live with such a crippling mistake for all of their life.

My son is highly remorseful of his actions, and as his father, it hurts me to see him go through this. He is soon to marry his fiance in May. Please support this bill and put us on a path to keep my boy on the right track.