



## House Bill 499

Date: March 4, 2025

Committee: Judiciary

**Position: Favorable**

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Founded in 1968, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce is the leading voice for business in Maryland. We are a statewide coalition of more than 7,000 members and federated partners working to develop and promote strong public policy that ensures sustained economic health and growth for Maryland businesses, employees, and families.

House Bill 499 (HB 499) expands expungement eligibility and changes provisions under Maryland's criminal procedure laws, including shortening waiting periods for filing expungement petitions, expanding eligibility, case search changes, and requiring individuals to have paid restitution or demonstrate inability to pay before seeking expungement.

This bill also mandates that the Maryland Judiciary Case Search no longer reference certain records, such as those resulting in acquittals or dismissals. By facilitating easier access to expungement for eligible individuals, HB 499 will help remove barriers to employment. This legislation supports efforts to address long-standing challenges related to the criminal justice system and its impact on individuals trying to reintegrate into the workforce.

Additionally, the U.S. Chamber of Commerce [released a report](#) in 2021 that estimated that excluding formerly incarcerated job seekers from the work force has cost the United States at least \$78 billion in lost gross domestic product. The ability to hire and retain qualified, hard-working individuals will help sustain healthy and prosperous businesses throughout Maryland.

The Maryland Chamber believes in the importance of second chance employment, both for developing our state's workforce and for uplifting our communities. In recent years, through our Maryland Chamber Foundation, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce has been actively engaged in seeking ways to address the challenges faced by the ex-offender community as these individuals prepare for and seek employment post-incarceration. We believe all Marylanders should be able to actively serve their communities.

For these reasons, the Maryland Chamber of Commerce respectfully requests a **Favorable Report** on HB 499.