



# LEGISLATIVE BLACK CAUCUS OF MARYLAND, INC.

The Maryland House of Delegates, 6 Bladen Street, Room 300, Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
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Chair Luke Clippinger

Judiciary Committee

100 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chair Clippinger and Members of the Committee,

The Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland offers strong favorable support for House Bill 499 (HB 499) Expungement Reform Act of 2025. This bill introduces crucial reforms to Maryland's expungement process by reducing waiting periods, expanding eligibility for record clearance, and prohibiting the Maryland Judiciary Case Search from displaying certain case records. House Bill 499 is a 2025 legislative priority for the Black Caucus.

In Maryland, Black communities are disproportionately impacted by the long-term consequences of criminal records due to systemic racial disparities in policing and sentencing. [The Maryland State Commission on Criminal Sentencing Policy](#) found that Black Marylanders are arrested and convicted at higher rates than their white counterparts for similar offenses, particularly for nonviolent drug-related crimes. [The collateral consequences of a criminal record create significant barriers](#) to employment, housing, and economic stability, perpetuating cycles of poverty and disenfranchisement. HB 499 ensures that individuals who have completed their sentences, including probation and parole, can more swiftly seek expungement, removing unnecessary obstacles to full reintegration into society.

The bill's expansion of expungement eligibility and restrictions on public case records will help reduce the stigma associated with past convictions, allowing Black Marylanders greater access to jobs, education, and stable housing. Research indicates that expungement significantly improves employment prospects, with one study finding that [wages increase by over 20%](#) within a year of record clearance. Additionally, HB 499 provides justice for those convicted of cannabis possession—offenses that have historically been enforced disproportionately against Black individuals—by ensuring that pardoned convictions are removed from public view.

HB 499 directly addresses racial inequities in the criminal justice system by giving individuals a fair chance to rebuild their lives and contribute to their communities. It aligns with the Black Caucus' commitment to advancing economic justice, reducing barriers to opportunity, and dismantling systemic policies that disproportionately harm Black and minority communities in Maryland.

For these reasons, the Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland strongly supports House Bill 499 and urges a favorable vote.

Legislative Black Caucus of Maryland