



Date: March 3, 2025

To: Chair Clippinger, Vice Chair Bartlett and the Judiciary Committee

Reference: House Bill 499 –Criminal Records–Expungement and Maryland Judiciary

Case Search (Expungement Reform Act of 2025)

Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chair Clippinger and Committee Members:

On behalf of LifeBridge Health's regional health system and our Center for Hope, we thank you for this opportunity to provide information on House Bill 499. Center for Hope provides intervention and prevention for: child abuse, domestic violence, community violence, and elder justice for survivors, caregivers, and communities. A criminal record can be both the cause and consequence of poverty and has detrimental effects on the employment prospects for the ¹[estimated 25% of working-age Marylanders with a record](#) (pg.26). Every year, approximately 15,000 Marylanders are released from state prisons and struggle to secure a job, find a place to live and reenter society. ²[Over 60 percent of formerly incarcerated persons remain unemployed](#) one year after release. This is mainly because more than ³[85% of employers perform background checks on all of their job applicants](#) and deny employment to many returning citizens based on a record. Thus, access to criminal record expungement is necessary to reintegrate into society properly.

Unfortunately, Maryland has a variety of laws that, in combination, prevent Marylanders from accessing the expungement services needed to reintegrate into society. Most charges are not eligible for expungement, leaving individuals released from incarceration with barriers to education, employment, housing, public assistance, occupational licensing, and much more. Center for Hope fully supports any legislation that eliminates barriers to employment for low-income workers and job seekers in Maryland for those that have completed their time served and met all restitution that applies.

For all the above stated reasons, we request a FAVORABLE report for House Bill 499.

For more information, please contact:

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<https://thedailyrecord.com/2022/01/19/baltimore-co-sheriffs-deputy-got-unusual-perks-with-plea-deal-in-detainee-rape-case/>

[https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Laws/StatuteText?article=gcp§ion=10-105&enactments=False&archived=False#:~:text=%C2%A0\(9\)%C2%A0%C2%A0%C2%A0%C2%A0A%20court%20may%20grant%20a%20petition%20for%20expungement%20at%20any%20time%20on%20a%20showing%20of%20good%20cause.](https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/Laws/StatuteText?article=gcp§ion=10-105&enactments=False&archived=False#:~:text=%C2%A0(9)%C2%A0%C2%A0%C2%A0%C2%A0A%20court%20may%20grant%20a%20petition%20for%20expungement%20at%20any%20time%20on%20a%20showing%20of%20good%20cause.)