

HELPING
OURSELVES TO
TRANSFORM
EDUCATING AND PROMOTING
MASS LIBERATION

**Favorable VOTE - HOUSE BILL 499/
SENATE BILL 432**

Dear Chairman Clippinger of the Judiciary Committee and members,

I am writing to urge your favorable vote for Senate Bill 432/House Bill 499, which seeks to allow expungement eligibility at the completion of a sentence, including any period of probation, parole, or mandatory supervision. The current system unjustly denies thousands of returning citizens the opportunity for a fresh start due to minor technical probation violations, preventing them from accessing employment, housing, education, and financial stability.

Maryland faces a growing crisis, with an estimated 1.5 million residents—nearly 25% of the population—holding a criminal record. Under the current law, even a technical probation violation—such as missing an appointment—can result in a lifetime ban on expungement, regardless of sentence completion. The Abhishek ruling further cemented this injustice, permanently disqualifying individuals from clearing their records even after serving their full sentence and completing the mandatory waiting period.

Key Facts:

- 43% of individuals under supervision fail to “successfully” complete parole or probation due to minor infractions.
- 24% of Maryland’s prison admissions are for supervision violations, many of which could have been prevented.
- Probation officers have broad discretion in reporting violations, creating inconsistencies in enforcement.

Solution:

SB 432 / HB 499 would restore fairness by ensuring that once a person has served their full sentence and completed the additional 5-10 year waiting period, they can seek expungement for eligible offenses. This bill does not provide automatic expungement but allows the courts to weigh objections from the State’s Attorney and victims, ensuring a balanced and just process.

A second chance should not be indefinitely denied over technical violations. I urge you to support SB 432 / HB 499 and help remove unnecessary barriers to successful reintegration.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I welcome the opportunity to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Dr. Carmen R. Johnson, Founder

Certified Paralegal with Advanced Studies in Criminal Law, Author, Advocate & Humanitarian. Lecture Specialist for prison and justice reform to Law Schools, Law Clinics, Students and the Community and a lobbyist in the State of Maryland

