



Testimony for the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

February 1, 2022

SB 111 – Occupational Licenses or Certificates - Pre-application Determinations - Criminal Convictions

JUSTIN NALLEY
PUBLIC POLICY ANALYST

FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

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The ACLU of Maryland supports SB 111 with one amendment, which would establish a process for potential applicants for an occupational license or certificate to obtain a determination, before submitting an application, as to whether certain criminal convictions would be the basis for the denial of an application for a certain occupational license or certificate.

Studies show that employment opportunities can reduce recidivism rates. Yet, for far too many Marylanders, a criminal record—regardless of how minor the offense, can be a bar to opportunities for success. The collateral consequences reach far beyond employment—a criminal record may compromise one’s eligibility for tuition assistance and stable housing. Moreover, these collateral consequences are particularly stark for communities of color.

Criminal records exclude individuals from a range of opportunities, including employment

Convictions in Maryland may result in the denial, suspension, or revocation of myriad business licenses, including: a barber license, a cosmetology license, an electrician license, professional engineer license, a landscape architect license, an interior designer certificate, and countless others. This bill will allow applicants to receive information if their conviction would be the basis of denial before spending time, energy, resources, and money, applying for a occupational license or certificate.

An amendment should be taken into consideration that there is a waiver of fees under indigent circumstances for applicants who cannot afford the fee.

For the foregoing reasons ACLU of Maryland urges a favorable report with the above amendment recommendation for SB 111.

