



TESTIMONY FOR SB0088

Criminal Procedure - Automatic Expungement - Pardoned Conviction of Possession of Cannabis (Pardons for Simple Possession of Cannabis Act of 2023)

Bill Sponsor: Senator Waldstreicher

Committee: Judicial Proceedings

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of SB0088 on behalf of the Maryland Legislative Coalition. The Maryland Legislative Coalition is an association of activists - individuals and grassroots groups in every district in the state. We are unpaid citizen lobbyists and our Coalition supports well over 30,000 members.

As Maryland, and other states wrestle with the fact that so many residents have been incarcerated for simple possession of marijuana, which will be legal in July, we must find a quick method for removing the stain that those convictions have had on the lives of so many people. This bill would mandate that all records related to convictions for possession be immediately expunged after a pardon is given by the Governor. The records will not be destroyed for three years but will not be searchable by anyone who does not have a legitimate reason for accessing them. After three years, they will be destroyed.

We believe that this is not only necessary, but past due for so many people.

We support this bill and recommend a **FAVORABLE** report in committee.