



TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HB664:

Criminal Procedure – Expungement of Records – Good Cause

TO: Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Deandre Wiggins, Program Manager

DATE: February 23rd, 2023

BetterU Construction support(s) House Bill 664 as a means of reducing the impact of incarceration and enhancing employment opportunities for our carpentry, plumbing, and electrical trainees in Baltimore, Maryland.

BetterU Construction Training is a 14-week pre-apprenticeship program for Baltimore residents with a high school diploma or GED. Experienced teachers prepare our students for success in the construction trades with an overview of entry-level plumbing, carpentry, and electrical skills. Students also receive essential safety training, financial coaching, a stipend, and driver's education. More than 70 percent of students are placed in careers that lead to high wages and apprenticeships.

The majority of our trainees are formerly incarcerated persons who have been locked out of access to employment, and we have seen examples of our team successfully placing individuals only to have records from 20+ years ago pop up on the background check and have them removed from their new position. This is a painfully disorienting process for them, and we believe wholeheartedly that access to Good Cause Expungement would provide relief.

HB0664 allows the courts to grant a petition for expungement at any time on a showing of good cause. Thus, the courts can use their judicial discretion in determining expungements, as [one judge did in Baltimore County, to get around the unit rule issue](#). This provision already exists in [Criminal Procedure §10-105 \(c9\)](#) but only applies to non-convictions and is rarely used. BetterU Construction fully supports any legislation that eliminates barriers to employment for low-income workers and job seekers in Maryland. For these reasons, we respectfully urge a favorable report.