



TESTIMONY FOR HB0788

Human Relations - Protections Against Discrimination - Criminal Records

Bill Sponsor: Delegate Alston

Committee: Judiciary

Organization Submitting: Maryland Legislative Coalition

Person Submitting: Cecilia Plante, co-chair

Position: FAVORABLE

I am submitting this testimony in favor of HB0788 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.

This bill, if enacted, would prohibit discrimination against a person who has a criminal record, unless that person is a sex offender or committed a crime against a vulnerable adult. This will allow persons who have criminal records who have transitioned back into society from being refused employment or housing because of their record.

This law does not preclude an employer from making inquiries consistent with Federal or State law, or if the position is one that would provide services or care to children or vulnerable adults. It also exempts housing providers from making inquiries in the case that the housing provider provides services or care to children or vulnerable adults.

Our members believe that when we transition people back into society, we should ensure that they have the means to take care of themselves and prosper. Being denied employment or housing, or other services will put them on a track to commit crimes and become incarcerated again.

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