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POSITION ON PROPOSED LEGISLATION

BILL: HB 550- Expungement - Vendor Contracts

FROM: Maryland Office of the Public Defender

POSITION: Favorable, with amendment

DATE: March 25, 2024

“Partial expungement” has been a needed reform for quite some time under the current expungement statute. This reform has been introduced over many legislative sessions. One of the barriers has been that the current technology of both the Central Repository and Judicial System have not been able to expunge an otherwise eligible charge from the whole case and keep the remaining ineligible charges intact. The current technology appears to permit only all or nothing expungement which hurts Marylanders trying to move on from their past.

House Bill 550 requires the Central Repository to NOT engage in any procurement relating to the technology of creating, storing, or expungement charges and records unless that technology is compatible with partial expungement. This is a critical step towards ensuring just, effective, and fiscally responsible and efficient expungement processes in the future.

We encourage an amendment to House Bill 550 to not only define “partial expungement” but also to include the Maryland Judiciary in NOT procuring technology that does not support partial expungement.

For these reasons, the Maryland Office of the Public Defender urges this Committee to issue a favorable report, with amendment on HB 550.

Submitted by: Government Relations Division of the Maryland Office of the Public Defender.

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