



## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF SENATE BILL 454/ HOUSE BILL 73**

### **Criminal Procedure - Expungement - Completion of Sentence**

TO: Members of the Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee and House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Reverend Carlos Battle, New Shiloh Baptist Church & WE OUR US

Greetings Committee Members,

I am Carlos Battle, a resident of District 40 in West Baltimore and a reverend at New Shiloh Baptist Church. I support SENATE BILL 454/ HOUSE BILL 73 to allow for expunging charges that may have involved a probation violation.

About 24 years ago, I received a possession with intent to distribute charge and took a plea deal because I was addicted to drugs and did not want to spend time in jail. I was sentenced to three years probation and 10 years of a suspended sentence. I was violated while on probation for missing a meeting and served the suspended sentence, making my charge permanently ineligible for expungement.

While incarcerated, I became the pastor of Sikesville Correctional Institution and attended Anne Arundel Community College. I also took classes on digital literacy to keep my skills up and worked in the library. Upon release, I came home and struggled to find employment. After years of searching, I found a job at Walmart and worked my way up to manager while earning a safe serve certification, allowing me to become a chef. I then moved on to Sinai Hospital as a chef for 10 years and currently work for Johns Hopkins University.

Today, I am in ministry at New Shiloh Baptist, attended by my friend and representative, Kweisi Mfume. I lead the prison and substance abuse ministry and am on the evangelism team. For six years, I have been a member of the WE OUR US MOVEMENT, distributing resources to the community, aiding the drug addicted, employing the youth with jobs, and giving hope in the streets of Baltimore. I also just opened housing in District 41 for formerly incarcerated citizens.

God has done wonders in my life, and I wish to help my brothers experiencing similar struggles. This bill will help me, and many of my congregants expunge their records after finishing their debt to society. I urge a favorable report.