



**House Judiciary Committee**

**March 5, 2024**

**House Bill 658**

**Criminal Procedure - Automated Expungement,  
Waiting Periods, and Adverse Actions  
Clean Slate Act of 2024**

**Support**

NCADD-Maryland supports House Bill 658. NCADD-Maryland has long advocated for policies that help people involved with the criminal justice system avoid some of the unintended collateral damage caused by our drug policies. When people who struggle with substance use disorders get treatment and start the recovery process, criminal records are often huge barriers to success. Obtaining employment and housing is difficult, and sometimes impossible. Without a place to live or a reliable income, some people are much more likely to re-offend and/or return to alcohol and drug use.

In 2022, Maryland voters legalized cannabis, leading the legislature to advocate for the expungement of charges related to cannabis possession, only to find that this was not possible due to current laws surrounding subsequent convictions, the unit rule, et al. The proposed legislation automates the expungement process instead of requiring written petitions. The bill also seeks to clear many barriers to expungement access.

These kinds of policy changes are a necessary component to significantly improving our communities. When people have served their time, they should have the opportunities and supports needed to ensure they are able maintain productive lives and livelihoods with their families. Removing some of the barriers to success will also help people with substance use disorders maintain their recovery.

We urge your support of House Bill 658.

*The Maryland Affiliate of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD-Maryland) is a statewide organization that works to influence public and private policies on addiction, treatment, and recovery, reduce the stigma associated with the disease, and improve the understanding of addictions and the recovery process. We advocate for and with individuals and families who are affected by alcoholism and drug addiction.*