

SB0432_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

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TESTIMONY ON SB#0432 - POSITION: FAVORABLE
Criminal Records – Expungement and Maryland Judiciary Case Search (Expungement Reform Act of 2025)

TO: Chair Smith, Vice Chair Waldstreicher, and members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee
FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of/ SB#/0432, Criminal Records – Expungement and Maryland Judiciary Case Search (Expungement Reform Act of 2025)

This bill acknowledges that past enforcement of laws in Maryland have had a disproportionate impact on certain population groups for certain judgements no longer considered criminal offenses requiring severe punishment. This bill is a racial and social justice attempt to correct those miscarriages of justice.

Maryland can correct this by passing this bill which alters certain provisions of law relating to waiting periods for the filing of certain petitions for expungement to authorize the filing of a petition a certain amount of time after the completion of the sentence. The pernicious effects of a criminal record in reestablishing oneself for housing and jobs is well known, this bill aids former convicts in their return to the community after serving a sentence. The bill clarifies which crimes can and should be expunged by adding to the list of misdemeanor convictions that a person may expunge under certain circumstances. It protects persons sentenced under laws since updated and changed on cannabis through prohibiting the Maryland Judiciary Case Search from in any way referring to the existence of a charge of possession of cannabis if the conviction was later pardoned by the Governor.

Many local and national political figures have reacted to Governor Moore’s work to clean the records of persons with cannabis criminal charges.¹ It is universally praised for the actions taken. This bill will make the executive order a law governing Maryland’s treatment of certain criminal offenses and records of them no longer an impediment to persons seeking to go on with their lives without the damages possession of criminal records afflicts on them.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB0432.

¹ <https://governor.maryland.gov/news/press/pages/what-people-are-saying-about-governor-moore%E2%80%99s-historic-executive-order-pardoning-175000-maryland-cannabis-convictions.aspx>