

Dear Chair Smith and the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

My name is Adrian Bridgers and I am a resident of District 45. I am writing in support of SB 398, the Automated Expungement bill, which ensures that all expunge-able misdemeanors are automatically hidden from public view in electronic court records.

Criminal record expungements are vital because they provide individuals with a genuine opportunity to move forward in life. By removing the barriers associated with a criminal record, expungement allows people to access better job opportunities, secure stable housing, and fully reintegrate into society without the weight of past mistakes limiting their potential & strides. Everyone deserves a fair chance at a fresh start once they have completed their sentence and parole obligations, which has already held them accountable.

Unfortunately, many individuals do not pursue expungement due to a lack of awareness about their eligibility, the complexity and cost of the legal process, or the discouragement that comes with the stigma of a past conviction. Because of these barriers, the expungement and sealing process should be as automatic as possible to ensure that all eligible individuals receive the relief they deserve without unnecessary obstacles.

For these reasons, I strongly urge a favorable report on SB 398.

Sincerely,
Adrian Bridgers