

## ***Governor's Expungement Bill for Automatic Sealing***

Dear Chair Smith and the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

My name is Tavon Jamaal Partlow Sr., and I am a resident of District 41. I am writing in support of SB 398, Automated Expungement. This bill automatically hides all expungable misdemeanors from public view in electronic court records.

I believe criminal record expungements are important because they offer individuals a chance to rebuild their lives without the constant burden of their past mistakes. Having the ability to expunge or seal a criminal record allows individuals who have served their time and worked hard to change their lives to be free from the lifelong stigma that a criminal record imposes. This opportunity for redemption is crucial, as it helps those who have paid their debt to society to fully reintegrate and access essential opportunities such as employment, education, and housing. Expungement is not about erasing history but rather giving individuals the tools to overcome past mistakes and contribute meaningfully to society.

I believe individuals do not pursue expungements because they often face significant obstacles, such as lack of awareness, fear of the process, or doubts about the potential for success. Many individuals may not know that expungement is an option, or they may be discouraged by the legal complexities and perceived difficulties in clearing their record. My story and many like me shows, overcoming these barriers can be a long and difficult journey, but with the right legislative changes, like those proposed in SB 398, more people would have access to the opportunity to move forward. By making the expungement process more accessible and automatic, we can empower individuals to leave their past behind and start anew, ultimately benefiting both the individuals and society as a whole.

For that reason, I believe the expungement and sealing process should be as automatic as possible to make sure that everyone who can benefit from the law does.

I urge a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'T. Partlow', followed by a large, stylized capital letter 'P'.