



SB 432 - Criminal Records – Expungement and Maryland Judiciary Case Search (Expungement Reform Act of 2025)

Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee

February 05, 2025

SUPPORT

Chair Smith, Vice-Chair and members of the committee thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of Senate Bill 432. This bill will reduce the impact of incarceration by eliminating probation violations as a permanent roadblock to criminal record expungement.

The CASH Campaign of Maryland promotes economic advancement for low-to-moderate income individuals and families in Baltimore and across Maryland. CASH accomplishes its mission through operating a portfolio of direct service programs, building organizational and field capacity, and leading policy and advocacy initiatives to strengthen family economic stability. CASH and its partners across the state achieve this by providing free tax preparation services through the IRS program 'VITA', offering free financial education and coaching, and engaging in policy research and advocacy. **Almost 4,000 of CASH's tax preparation clients earn less than \$10,000 annually. More than half earn less than \$20,000.**

According to the Bureau of Justice Statistics (BJS), one in three US adults has a criminal record that will surface in a routine background check. In Maryland, [it is estimated that 1.5 million residents, nearly 25% of the state's population](#), have a visible criminal record. Mass incarceration and hyper-criminalization serve as major drivers of poverty; having a criminal record can present obstacles to employment, housing, public assistance, education, family reunification, building good credit, and more.

The Maryland General Assembly passed the REDEEM Act, which cuts the criminal record expungement waiting period in half. This allows millions of Marylanders to seek relief sooner, only to discover that they are still barred.

Senate Bill 432 seeks to resolve this by altering the expungement criteria to be accessible at "the time when a sentence has expired, including any period of probation, parole, or mandatory supervision," removing the term "satisfies" and "satisfactorily" from the expungement statutes. This means that once a person has served the entire sentence and finished the additional 5-10-year waiting period, they will be eligible for expungement if the charge is eligible. The State's Attorney's Office and the victim still retain the right to object to the expungement in accordance with Criminal Procedure §10-110 f(1), leaving the courts to make the final decision as to whether or not the expungement is in the interest of justice as opposed to a blanket ban on all violations. The bill also expands the expungement list by adding several misdemeanors and removes all cannabis convictions from Case Search.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable report for SB 432.

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