Dear Members of the **Judiciary Committee,**

This testimony is being submitted by Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore, a group of individuals working to move white folks as part of a multi-racial movement for equity and racial justice in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County. We are also working in collaboration with Out for Justice. I am a resident of **District 45. I am testifying in support of HB0055: Good Cause Expungement.**

Showing Up for Racial Justice

According to the Legal Aid Justice Center, '"Criminal records are more than just files stowed away in a database—they can stand in the way of renting an apartment, securing a job or a work credential, gaining admission to or paying for college, keeping custody of children, leaning on public benefits programs when needed, and voting in elections."[1] Maryland has moved to broaden the availability of expungement in recent years, in recognition of the fact that all of society benefits when a citizen is rehabilitated from involvement in the criminal justice system and is no longer burdened by the weight of old convictions that reflect who they used to be, not who they are now.

Even under our broader expungement laws, however, there are people still left behind: those whose situations are not encompassed or imagined by the current law, whom the courts have no flexibility to assist. Just as a court has the discretion to hand down a sentence, so they should have the discretion to grant an expungement if they find there is "good cause" to do so.

Not limiting the opportunities of citizens who have paid their debt to transition successfully back into the community and the economy simply makes sense for Maryland. It is for this reason that **I am encouraging you to support HB0055: Good Cause Expungement.**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Shillenn
5401 Elsrode Avenue Baltimore 21214
Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore

---

[1] https://www.justice4all.org/news/transformative-record-sealing-law-passes/