



EMPLOY PRINCE GEORGE'S
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Bill Number:	House Bill 545
Title:	Criminal Procedure – Automated Expungement
Committee:	Judiciary
Hearing Date:	March 4, 2025
Position:	FAVORABLE

Employ Prince George's, Inc. ("EPG") is a nonprofit organization that serves as the principal workforce development entity for Prince George's County and is responsible for regulating policy development and the administration of workforce activities related to services and programs funded by the federal Workforce Innovation & Opportunity Act (WIOA).

The passage of House Bill 545 is a critical step in ensuring that Marylanders with eligible criminal records are not permanently barred from employment, housing, and educational opportunities due to the burdensome and complex expungement process. By automating expungement for certain nonviolent offenses, this bill will help remove unnecessary barriers to employment for thousands of job seekers across the state.

As an organization that engages directly with job seekers, employers, and workforce partners, we see firsthand how past criminal records—often for offenses long in the past—serve as a major obstacle to stable employment. Despite their qualifications and readiness to work, many individuals face rejection solely due to the presence of an expungeable but still visible record. This systemic barrier disproportionately affects communities of color and individuals from economically disadvantaged backgrounds, exacerbating cycles of poverty and unemployment.

EPG has taken proactive measures to address this issue by hosting expungement fairs, providing vital resources to individuals seeking a fresh start. However, these events require significant time and resources that could be better allocated to workforce development programs, such as job training, career counseling, and employer partnerships. Automating expungement would allow EPG and other workforce organizations to focus on their core mission – helping individuals secure meaningful employment and achieve economic self-sufficiency.

Beyond the individual impact, this legislation will benefit employers and Maryland's economy as a whole. Businesses across sectors are struggling to fill vacancies and secure skilled labor. Expanding the workforce by allowing more individuals to participate without unnecessary legal barriers will strengthen our state's economic competitiveness. Moreover, reducing recidivism through employment has been proven to increase public safety and decrease reliance on social services, saving taxpayer money in the long run.

This legislation is a common-sense policy that will create pathways to economic opportunity for countless Marylanders while strengthening our workforce and communities. For these reasons, EPG respectfully urges a favorable report on House Bill 545.