



Maryland Chiefs of Police Association

Maryland Sheriffs' Association



MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable William C. Smith, Jr., Chair and
Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee

FROM: Darren Popkin, Executive Director, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Andrea Mansfield, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee
Samira Jackson, Representative, MCPA-MSA Joint Legislative Committee

DATE: February 17, 2026

RE: **SB 483 - Criminal Procedure - Automated Expungement (Clean Slate Act of 2026)**

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **OPPOSE SB 483**. This bill creates an expungement system that would automatically expunge criminal records once the eligibility criteria are met, without relying on individuals to apply for expungement. While we recognize the bill's goal of helping individuals move forward after past mistakes, the creation of an automatic expungement system raises serious concerns for public safety, particularly as it relates to law enforcement hiring and background review processes.

Police departments and sheriff's offices maintain some of the most intentional, thorough, and demanding hiring standards of any profession. Applicants seeking positions of public trust, authority, and access to sensitive information must undergo extensive screening. Automatic expungement would remove critical information from an applicant's record, making certain prior criminal matters inaccessible to the agency unless voluntarily disclosed by the applicant. This creates an unacceptable gap in the hiring process, where serious past conduct may never come to light.

Given the unique responsibilities of law enforcement officers, it is essential that chiefs and sheriffs have access to the fullest possible picture of an applicant's background and character. While circumstances and rehabilitation can and should be considered, agencies cannot make informed decisions if key details are automatically erased from review.

For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **OPPOSE SB 483** and urge an **UNFAVORABLE** committee report.