



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 525 - Criminal Procedure - Expungement of Records - Good Cause**

POSITION: **OPPOSE**

The Maryland Chiefs of Police Association (MCPA) and the Maryland Sheriffs' Association (MSA) **OPPOSE SB 525**. This bill would authorize individuals to petition a court to have any misdemeanor conviction expunged five years after completion of all sentencing requirements and any felony conviction expunged after seven years, subject only to a broad “good cause” finding. The statutory criteria for “good cause” include subjective and open-ended factors such as rehabilitation, nature of the crime, and impact on employment, without clear guidance on how these standards should be applied.

SB 525 creates a path to expungement that is broader and less structured than current law, which historically has built in meaningful limitations on the types of convictions that can be cleared and the interests that should be balanced. Expanding expungement eligibility in this manner undermines the integrity and usefulness of criminal records that are vital to public safety, law enforcement screening, and community protection. The ambiguity of “good cause” invites inconsistent application across jurisdictions, placing an undue burden on courts and potentially minimizing the seriousness of past criminal conduct.

Further, law enforcement agencies depend on complete and accurate criminal history information for investigations, background screenings, and risk assessments. Removing convictions from public records, even after the passage of time, compromises the ability of chiefs and sheriffs to fully assess an individual’s history when making decisions about hiring, grant funding, interagency cooperation, and public safety initiatives. A court’s discretionary determination of good cause based on subjective criteria does not ensure that all relevant risks or patterns of behavior are appropriately considered before critical record information is erased. Expungement policy must strike a careful balance between reintegration of individuals into society and the legitimate, ongoing needs of public safety entities to have full access to relevant criminal history

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information. For these reasons, MCPA and MSA **OPPOSE SB 525** and urge an **UNFAVORABLE** report.

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