

Hearing March 3, 2026
Mary Jo Kirschman for BeTheChangeBmore
Baltimore, MD 21214

Testimony on HB 0131
Position: Favorable
Criminal Procedure-Exoungement-Adverse Actions and Removal From
Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) System

To: Chair Bartlett and Vice-Chair Davis, and members of the Judiciary Committee
From: Mary Jo Kirschman, D43, on behalf of BeTheChangeBmore
I am submitting this testimony in support of HB 0131

BeTheChangeBmore is a Baltimore area advocacy organization with a network of over 1300 Marylanders. Since 2016 we have been working in partnership with organizations statewide to protect democracy and expand peoples' rights at the local, state and national levels.

We have long supported legislation that will give people second chances after they have "paid their dues" to society. Through our experience with organizations that advocate for the benefit of returning citizens, we have learned that getting a sustainable job and access to governmental services are some of the most important ways for people to reenter the community in a healthy and productive way. This is clearly to the benefit of all of us.

If it is the goal of the Legislature to make our communities better and safer, then it is logical to ensure that you remove obstacles to accomplishing these goals. This includes opening doors for people who have had past criminal charges or conviction, but who are now on track to a better life. It would protect their privacy, at no cost to the community.

Please help people to move forward, to strengthen all of us. Let's finish this job.

We ask that the Judiciary Committee make a favorable report on HB 0131.

Thank you.