



## **TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF HOUSE BILL 824:**

### **Criminal Procedure - Expungement - Conviction of Distribution of Controlled Dangerous Substances**

TO: Members of the House Judiciary Committee

FROM: Trina Selden

- **INTRODUCTION**

- “I am Trina Selden, founder and executive director of Out for Justice.”
- I founded the organization in 2006 to assist people like me who are affected by the criminal legal system in navigating it and reacclimating to society upon release.

- **MY HISTORY**

- 26 years ago, I received a distribution charge that I have never been able to walk away from. This led to crippling barriers to employment and housing upon release.
- In response, I worked diligently with the community on legislation to ban the box on employment applications and was ecstatic to see that reform reach statewide.
- Had I not created Out for Justice, I would not be allowed to work a minimum wage job despite having a bachelor’s degree in criminal justice.

- **OUT FOR JUSTICE MEMBERS**

- Since then, I have worked with hundreds of returning citizens in similar situations, and Out for Justice has been at the forefront of policy reform to address these issues.
- Moreover, I have hired a core team of returning citizens facing similar barriers, and though I am proud of my work, I can’t hire everyone.

- **HOW THE BILL FIXES THIS**

- House Bill 824 would allow me to have my record expunged after nearly three decades of being denied access to what every Marylander deserves: a chance to move forward.

- **CLOSING**

- I urge a favorable report.