

Friday, February 27, 2026



## Showing Up for Racial Justice

Dear Members of the Judicial Proceedings Committee,

I am submitting this testimony as a member of Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) Baltimore, a group of individuals working to mobilize white people in a multi-racial movement for equity and racial justice in Baltimore City, Baltimore County, and Howard County. We are also working in collaboration with Out for Justice, which advocates for the reform of policies and practices that adversely affect incarcerated people's successful reintegration into society. I am a resident of Baltimore City and District 41. I am testifying **in support of HB113 Criminal Procedure - Expungement of Records - Resisting Arrest and Making a False Statement to a Law Enforcement Officer.**

Currently in Maryland, only about 125 out of 1200 criminal charges are eligible for expungement. Because of the "unit rule", even if an individual is convicted of charges that are eligible for expungement, the presence of any non-expungable charge prevents **any** of their eligible charges from being expunged.

Lack of access to expungement has potentially devastating and lifelong impacts for previously convicted individuals. Having a criminal record can lead to people in effect being punished for their offenses long after they've served their debt to society; previously convicted individuals with criminal records can have difficulty getting employment, housing, certifications and licenses, and access to other resources that are critically necessary to re-integrate into their communities and be a full-fledged member of society. Those who have met the requirements of their sentence including probation, parole, fines, and community service should have the opportunity to full rejoin society and move on with their lives, free of the stigma of past convictions.

Both resisting arrest and making a false statement to a law enforcement officer misdemeanor offenses, yet they both render individuals ineligible for expungement of their

criminal records. It is very common for individuals charged with either resisting arrest or making a false statement to receive other charges that **are** eligible for expungement, yet for those individuals, given the “unit rule”, misdemeanor convictions like resisting arrest or making a false statement can result in their entire criminal record not being expunged. Misdemeanors such as these should not be a burden a reformed and returned citizen has to carry for the rest of their life. Both of these charges should be made eligible for expungement. HB113 would make that possible by adding resisting arrest and making a false statement to a law enforcement officer to the list of misdemeanor charges eligible for expungement.

It is for these reasons that I am encouraging you to vote **in support of Criminal Procedure-Expungement of Records-Resisting Arrest and Making a False Statement to a Law Enforcement Officer HB113.**

Thank you for your time, service, and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Dr. Katherine Blaha  
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Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) Baltimore