2601 N. HOWARD STREET BALTIMORE, MD 21218
TEL (410) 625-LGBT (5428)
FAX (410) 625-7423
www.freestate-justice.org
Lauren Pruitt, Esq.
Legal Director
LPruitt@freestate-justice.org

Judiciary Committee

100 Taylor Office House Building

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Friday, February 27, 2026

HB0113 – Criminal Procedure – Expungement of Records – Resisting Arrest and Making a False Statement to a Law Enforcement Officer

Position: **FAVORABLE**

Chair Bartlett, Vice Chair Davis, and Esteemed Members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Lauren Pruitt, and I am the Legal Director at FreeState Justice, a nonprofit organization dedicated to serving LGBTQ+ Marylanders from diverse backgrounds. I am writing in support of **HB0113**, which would expand access to expungement by allowing individuals with certain misdemeanor convictions, including resisting arrest and certain false statement offenses, to apply for expungement once eligible.

HB0113 addresses a critical gap in Maryland's current expungement eligibility. While progress has been made in expungement reform, many Marylanders continue to face significant obstacles to accessing stable employment, housing, and educational opportunities. These barriers further exacerbate disparities affecting marginalized communities, especially the LGBTQ+ community, which already faces disproportionate levels of poverty, employment discrimination, and over-policing.

Expungement reform broadly would:

- **Advance Equity in the Legal System:** By expanding the list of convictions eligible for expungement, the criminal justice system takes another step toward

ensuring certain offenses do not result in long-lasting punishment and lack of access to opportunity.

- **Promote Economic Mobility:** Conviction records severely inhibit access to employment opportunities. By allowing for the removal of certain convictions, this reform expands access to job opportunities, stable employment, and upward mobility while also supporting the broader Maryland economy.

I strongly urge the committee to issue a favorable report for **HB0113**. Expanding the list of convictions eligible for expungement reaffirms Maryland's commitment to a more equitable legal system that encourages rehabilitation and reintegration.

Sincerely,

Lauren Pruitt
Legal Director
FreeState Justice