

Dear Members of the Judiciary Committee,

This testimony is being submitted in collaboration with Showing Up for Racial Justice Baltimore and Out for Justice. I am a resident of **District 46**. I am a workforce development professional, organizational psychology practitioner, community association board member, and proud resident of Baltimore City. **I am testifying in support of HB113, Criminal Procedure - Expungement of Records - Resisting Arrest and Making a False Statement to a Law Enforcement Officer.**

This bill would add resisting arrest and making a false statement to a law enforcement officer to the list of misdemeanor charges eligible for expungement. Currently, these are two charges of the approximately 1200 charges that exist, of which about 125 are currently eligible for expungement. These two charges often appear alongside others; the “unit rule” means that even if other charges in a case are eligible for expungement, the presence of a resisting arrest or false statement conviction will prevent any of the eligible charges from being expunged.

Those who have met the requirements of their sentence including probation, parole, fines, community service, etc. should be able to have an opportunity to return to society and move on with their lives, free of the stigma of convictions they have moved past. Those who have criminal records will often experience obstacles to employment, housing, public financing, licensing, and education. If they are not able to access these things, their options are extremely limited which is not congruent with allowing them to successfully return to society after they’ve served their sentence. Neither resisting arrest nor making a false statement to a law enforcement officer, both misdemeanor charges, should be a conviction a reformed and returned citizen has to carry for the rest of their life. Both should be made 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,

John Preston Ford

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