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HB 131

Criminal Procedure – Expungements - Adverse Actions and Removal from Maryland Electronic Courts (MDEC) System

Judiciary Committee Hearing
March 3, 2026

Position: FAVORABLE

To the Honorable Members of the Judiciary Committee:

[Community Legal Services](#) (CLS) is a nonprofit legal services provider dedicated to ensuring equitable access to justice and due process of law for Maryland’s most under-represented populations. We strive to provide high quality legal representation and counsel that supports and strengthens the economic, social, health, and housing stability of our clients. We strongly support passage of HB 131.

CLS provides legal representation and guidance to thousands of Maryland residents every year, and we regularly conduct expungement clinics where CLS attorneys and volunteers provide free legal services to help Marylanders expunge eligible charges from their public records as they seek to get a fresh start in their lives. We have seen many, many positive impacts for the clients we have helped. **However, if people can be penalized for exercising their legal right not to disclose expunged information, then the whole purpose and intent of expungement is frustrated.** This bill addresses this issue.

This bill affirms that a person’s refusal to disclose expunged information cannot be the sole basis to deny a license, permit, registration, governmental service, or admission to an educational institution. Doing so, HB 131 closes a loophole that operates as a barrier to obtaining the full benefits and intended purposes for expungements by reinforcing the fundamental principle that expunged charges should not continue to operate as a barrier to housing, employment, and eligibility for resources and programs.

For these reasons, we respectfully urge the committee to issue a favorable report on HB 131.

Please feel free to reach out to Jessica Quincosa, Executive Director, or Lisa Sarro, Director of Litigation & Advocacy, with any questions at quincosa@clspgc.org, and sarro@clspgc.org, respectively.