

SB 483/HB 360: Criminal Procedure - Automated Expungement (Clean Slate Act of 2026): Please vote to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Judiciary Committee:

I am writing to strongly urge you to **OPPOSE HB 360/SB 483**, the Clean Slate Act of 2026, during committee action, floor votes, or any further consideration.

While the goal of helping rehabilitated individuals is understandable, automatic, mass-scale sealing without individual petitions, judicial review, or victim input is reckless and prioritizes offender privacy over public safety, transparency, and accountability.

Criminal records exist for a reason: they allow employers (particularly in education, healthcare, childcare, finance, security, or roles with vulnerable populations), landlords, schools, professional licensing boards, and communities to make informed decisions. Automatically erasing these records after fixed timelines—regardless of the offense's circumstances, victim impact, or underlying behavior—will hide critical information, increase problems in hiring/housing, and diminish deterrence for misdemeanor crimes.

Maryland already provides expungement through petition-based processes for non-convictions, certain low-level misdemeanors, and specific cases, ensuring careful balancing of rehabilitation with community protection. Automating expungement for potentially hundreds of thousands of cases will create errors, overbroad application, and reduced trust in the justice system.

Public safety and victim rights must not be sacrificed for expediency. I urge you to reject this sweeping, automatic approach and maintain accountable, case-by-case expungement that protects both individuals and communities.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to **vote against HB 360/SB 483**.

Thank you for your attention to this vital public safety and criminal justice issue.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals