



THE EPISCOPAL DIOCESE OF MARYLAND

SUPPORT

HB 122

Criminal Procedure – Expungement of Records – Expansion

Judiciary

Testimony presented by Rev. Kathy Shahinian

2/01/2022

Having a criminal record can severely limit one's access to employment, education, housing, civic engagement, and public assistance. Nearly 9 in 10 employers, 4 in 5 property owners, and 3 in 5 colleges use background checks to screen for applicants' criminal records, and one study found more than 45,000 federal and state statutes and regulations impose disqualifications or disadvantages or disadvantages on individuals with a conviction. Even when there isn't a conviction, an arrest records decreases a person's employment prospects more than other common employment- related stigmas. Additionally, the collateral damage of having a criminal record reaches across generations, as the socioeconomic barriers associated with a parent's criminal record can harm a child's long-term well-being and outcomes.

These represent disproportionately high rates as criminal records can be used to target noncitizens for deportation, severing familial ties within migrant communities.

The U.S. Department of Justice, Bureau of Justice has found that inadequacies in the accuracy and completeness of criminal history records are the single most serious deficiency affecting the Nation's criminal history record information system and that many of the criminal history records currently circulated by the repositories are difficult to decipher, particularly by noncriminal justice users. We encourage a favorable report.

