



Advocacy for Children with Disabilities

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**TESTIMONY OF AFRICAN CARIBBEAN AMERICAN PARENTS
OF CHILDREN WITH DISABILITIES, INC. (AFCAMP)
BEFORE THE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE
REGARDING RAISED S.B. 366: AN ACT CONCERNING THE ERASURE OF RECORDS IN DELINQUENCY
AND FAMILY WITH SERVICE NEEDS MATTERS**

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Executive Director

Senator Coleman, Representative Fox and members of the Judiciary Committee, AFCAMP submits this testimony in support of raised **S.B. 366: An Act Concerning Erasure of Records in Delinquency and Family with Service Needs Matters**. AFCAMP is a parent-driven nonprofit organization with a mission to educate, empower and engage parents and community to improve quality of life for children with special needs and others at risk of education inequity or system involvement. We urge you to pass S.B. 366 because it will promote equal access by all eligible youth to a juvenile records erasure process that is currently limited to youth and families who have the knowledge and resources to petition for erasure.

The proposed legislation provides for the automatic erasure and destruction of police and court records for any juvenile involved in a non-serious juvenile offense or family with service needs (FWSN) matter. S.B. 366 removes a requirement that youth with certain juvenile court convictions or involvement initiate a complicated petition process to have their records erased. S.B. 366 will eliminate a procedural barrier that disproportionately impacts youth of color and of lower socioeconomic means.

S.B. 366 retains the criteria for erasure of records that exist in current law and does not change the four year waiting period and petition procedure for youth convicted of serious juvenile offenses. The proposed bill promotes the confidentiality that is integral to a truly rehabilitative juvenile justice system.

The passage of this Act is crucial because:

- Even though a youth's history in the juvenile justice system is supposed to be confidential, juvenile records are often inadvertently shared or revealed, hampering a youth's successful reintegration into the community;
- Automatic erasure of non-serious juvenile court records facilitates rehabilitation for all youth, not just those limited few who are knowledgeable of and able to pursue a legal process;

- It protects youth who have committed non-serious offenses from potential disqualification from employment opportunities, and;
- It protects and fosters the growth of those youth who have had limited indiscretions and have not re-entered the system.

For the aforementioned reasons, AFCAMP urges you to act favorably on Raised S.B. 366.

Respectfully submitted.