

Written testimony to the Connecticut General Assembly's Judiciary Committee **in support** of Senate Bill No. 1019: An Act Concerning the Board of Pardons and Paroles, Erasure of Criminal Records for Certain Misdemeanor and Felony Offenses, Prohibiting Discrimination Based on Erased Criminal History Record Information and Concerning the Recommendations of the Connecticut Sentencing Commission with Respect to Misdemeanor Sentences.

3/10/2021

To the Honorable Senator Winfield, the Honorable Representative Stafstrom, and distinguished members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary:

My name is Karla Fackler Grafton and I am a member of Emanuel Lutheran Church in Hartford. I currently live in West Hartford and am a librarian at the John P. Webster Library at First Church, West Hartford. I am writing in support of Raised Senate Bill No. 1019.

According to the FBI, 30% of American adults have some sort of criminal record. These records can plague people throughout their whole lives as most employers run background checks before hiring. Additionally, a disproportional number of black men have felony convictions. Mass incarceration had disproportionally affected communities of color. Passing clean slate legislation is a first step in working towards more equity in our system.

Clean slate will make our communities safer. With good clean slate legislation, people who have already been punished will be able to get better jobs and thus be better able to take care of their families and contribute to the larger community. Passing clean slate legislation will allow people to get on with their lives and really make a change. Our current system holds people back and does not allow them to reach their full potential.

With S.B. 1019, Connecticut will gain a stronger economy, better public safety, and will advance racial equity.

I encourage all members of the Judiciary Committee, on both sides of the aisle, to support this important legislation.

Thank you.

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