

## Testimony to the Judiciary Committee in Support of SB 1019

Co-chairs Sen. Winfield and Rep. Stafstrom, Ranking Members Sen. Kissel and Rep. Fishbein, and esteemed Members of the Judiciary Committee, I am writing in support of SB 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.

My name is Christine Halfar. I am a resident of Danbury and a long-time member of the American Civil Liberties Union. I support SB 1019 for the automatic erasure of criminal records. Mass incarceration has had real, ongoing consequences in Connecticut, disproportionately hurting Black and brown communities in our state and burdening hundreds of thousands of Connecticut residents with a criminal record. Records present barriers to employment, housing, occupational licensing, and higher education. This Clean Slate law will automatically expunge the records of people who have served their time, returned to our communities, and remained crime-free. A criminal record should not be a lifetime sentence.

Clean Slate makes communities safer. When people have access to jobs, housing, occupational licensing, they are more likely to earn higher wages and much less likely to recidivate. I am very impressed by the University of Michigan Law School study which found that recidivism rates for people who have had their records expunged are so low that they actually “pose a lower crime risk than the general population as a whole.”

With SB 1019 we can strengthen our economy, improve public safety, and advance racial justice. I encourage all members of the Judiciary Committee, on both sides of the aisle, to support this important measure. Thank you.

Christine Halfar  
Danbury CT

