

Testimony to the Connecticut General Assembly's Judiciary Committee

In support of Senate Bill No. 1019

3/10/2021

Co-Chairs Sen. Winfield & Rep. Stafstrom; Ranking Members Sen. Kissel & Rep. Fishbein; and esteemed Members of the Judiciary Committee, I am writing **in support of S.B. 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.*

My name is Lori Martin and I am a resident of New Haven. **I support S.B. 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. **9 in 10 employers, 4 in 5 landlords, and 3 in 4 colleges** use background checks. Clean Slate 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.

As the Executive Director of Haven's Harvest, a food recovery non-profit, I see the consequences of mass incarceration of Black and Brown communities in the high level of food insecurity in these communities. We support re-entry programs with recovered food- as a way to support these individuals transitioning back into society. That some of these folks have no food- and/or are homeless- speaks to another way our society marginalizes Black and Brown communities. We can do better. We need to do better.

With S.B. 1019, Connecticut 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.

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