

Written Testimony Submitted to the CT General Assembly Joint Committee Judiciary in support of Raised 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 CT Sentencing Commission With Respect To Misdemeanor Sentences

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

I am Christie Sanders, a member of the Unitarian Universalist Society: East in Manchester, CT and I am writing in support of Senate Bill No. 1019. I am white and live in the suburbs. Despite that, I am not the least bit afraid of a strong Clean Slate bill.

This bill will allow people who have already been punished to support themselves, provide for their families and contribute to their communities. I support this bill because it will include all misdemeanors and Class C, D, and E felonies, will be applied retroactively and include anti discrimination protections for people with records. After a certain number of crime free years someone with a record is no more likely to commit a crime than anyone else without a record.

In CT 25% to 31% of Black men have a felony conviction. Nationally, this compares to 8% of the total population. This is driven in part by the fact that Black people continue to receive harsher sentences for the same crimes as white people. These records haunt people for the rest of their lives. They are unable to meet their basic needs of work, housing and education.

With the passage of Senate Bill No.1019, CT will strengthen our economy, improve public safety and advance racial justice. I encourage all members of the Judiciary Committee to support this important measure. Thank you.