

House Judiciary Committee, Rhode Island General Assembly

Date: April 30th, 2026

SUPPORT for H7204 – Relating to Criminal Procedure – Expungement of Criminal Records

Dear Chairperson McEntee, Vice Chair Knight, and the members of the House Judiciary Committee,

My name is Erika and I am a Deaf person currently finishing my probation and an organizing member of Black and Pink Providence.

I am here to share support for this bill due to my personal experience being held for probation violations. As a Deaf person I have not been offered ASL interpretation at my probation meetings and have not had the rules of probation explained to me in my first language of ASL. As an immunocompromised homeless individual I frequently visit the hospital for medical care. My main question is why I have been held without bail for probation violations that have not been explained to me in ASL and then not offered adequate health care services while incarcerated with also no ASL interpretation provided while at the ACI.

If I am held without bail the ACI should be able to meet my health and language needs. If this is not possible why am I not offered bail on violations? When I have been held in the ACI I have lost my shelter bed, my health has been compromised, and I have lost contact with my housing case manager and lost housing opportunities that I was working on. This has set me back considerably with stabilizing.

Please pass this bill and consider the unique challenges of navigating probation as a Deaf, LGBTQ person with immunocompromised chronic illness and being homeless.

BAIL ON 32 (H7651) would create a fairer process. This reform would help protect due process, reduce unnecessary incarceration, and make our justice system more efficient.

I respectfully urge you to pass BAIL ON 32 (H7651) without further delay.

Sincerely,

Erika

Providence, RI