
Testimony in Support of S2161, S2711, S2299, and S2313

From Siraj Sindhu <siraj@reclaimri.org>

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To Senate Judiciary Committee <SenateJudiciary@rilegislature.onmicrosoft.com>

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Dear Senator LaMountain and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee,

I am writing to express my strong support for S2161, S2711, S2299, and S2313. My name is Siraj Sindhu, of 61 Chapin Ave in Providence.

I support these bills because they will help us create a justice system worthy of the name "justice." These bills address both the injustice of our carceral system and the long-term barriers that criminal records create for people seeking to live meaningful, contributive lives.

S2161 (Bail on 32) would help fix our broken probation system. Rhode Island currently has one of the harshest probation systems in the country. Individuals accused of probation violations can be incarcerated without bail while waiting for a hearing, often for weeks. During this time, many people lose their jobs, housing, and stability, even when the alleged violation would not normally result in jail time. **This infringes on our civil liberties and offends the American commitment to due process under the law.**

This system also contributes significantly to incarceration in Rhode Island. Alleged probation violators make up a large portion of admissions to the Adult Correctional Institutions, which places unnecessary strain on individuals, families, and taxpayers. Reforms like S2161 help ensure that detention is reserved for cases where it is truly necessary while protecting due process.

Clean Slate and Expungement Bills

I also strongly support the Clean Slate Initiative bills S2711, S2299, and S2313, which would improve Rhode Island's expungement process and create meaningful second chances for people who have completed their sentences and demonstrated rehabilitation.

S2711 would authorize the automatic expungement of eligible conviction records through electronic processes within the judicial system. Many people who qualify for expungement never receive it because the current process is complicated and expensive. Automating expungement ensures that individuals who have already met the legal requirements can truly move forward.

S2299 would allow the expungement of multiple non-violent felony convictions ten years after a sentence has been completed. People who have lived law-abiding lives for many years should have the opportunity to rebuild their futures without being permanently defined by past mistakes.

S2313 would reduce the waiting period for expungement eligibility to three years for a single misdemeanor and

five years for felonies and multiple misdemeanors. Shortening these timelines reflects the reality that individuals who remain conviction-free for several years are highly unlikely to reoffend and deserve a fair chance to pursue employment, housing, and stability.

Criminal records can create lifelong barriers to employment, housing, and education. These reforms would allow more Rhode Islanders to contribute fully to their communities and support their families.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Senate Judiciary Committee to support and pass S2161, S2711, S2299, and S2313.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,
Siraj Sindhu
Providence, Rhode Island