



HB 3601 (LEACH): CLEAN SLATE **AUTOMATION**

TEXAS NEEDS CLEAN SLATE RECORD CLEARANCE: SUPPORT AUTOMATIC RECORD CLEARING TO STOP THE CYCLE OF CRIME

Millions of Texans are living with a criminal record. Whether a conviction for a felony or a misdemeanor, a diverted or deferred sentence, or merely an arrest, a criminal record can trigger a net of legal prohibitions and diminished opportunity that have little to do with public safety. Barriers that make it difficult to find gainful employment, secure stable housing, or support a family make it harder to escape the cycle of crime and can be a lifetime burden.

THE CURRENT SYSTEM FAILS TO DELIVER ITS PROMISE

While current Texas law allows people the opportunity to clear certain criminal records, the process is costly, complex and burdensome:

- People are not notified when they are eligible to apply for record clearance
- Different sets of eligibility criteria and waiting periods to apply
- The process is difficult to navigate without legal assistance, which most cannot afford

These obstacles are keeping Texans from getting the relief they need for fair shot at redemption and access to opportunities to support themselves and their families.

THE SOLUTION: AN AUTOMATIC RECORD CLEARANCE PROCESS

Our Texas record clearance law should deliver the outcomes that it promises: second chances for people eligible to have their old records cleared. By enacting Clean Slate reform that automates the record clearance process, we can ensure that impacted Texans receive the relief that our record clearance law intends.

HB 3601 will:

- Automate record clearance for Texans with first-time, nonviolent misdemeanor offenses after they successfully complete supervision and their charge is dismissed.
- Use technology to automatically identify people entitled to relief so that the person seeking to clear their record will no longer have to initiate the process or pay any fees.

When our loved ones, neighbors and community members are barred from fully participating in society and our economy, we all lose out. Passing HB 3601 is an important step toward increasing safety, equity and second chances.