

**Safe & Just**  
Michigan

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# Safe & Just Michigan Applauds Passage of Clean Slate Legislation

*Bills to expand access to expungements on their way to governor for signing*

LANSING — Safe & Just Michigan applauds the passage of the Michigan Clean Slate package, which will automatically expunge simple misdemeanors and non-assaultive felonies from the records of hundreds of thousands of Michiganders who have lived crime-free for at least seven years, and make it possible for thousands more to apply for the expungement of other old convictions.

“Old criminal records prevent people from getting good jobs and housing — even after decades of lawful behavior — and Michigan’s current expungement process is too narrow and too burdensome to help the vast majority of people who could benefit from it. This is in spite of the fact that people who receive expungements in Michigan are less likely to commit a crime than a member of the general public, and see, on average, a 23 percent increase in income within a year of getting their records sealed.” Safe & Just Michigan Executive Director John S. Cooper said. “Safe & Just Michigan is grateful for all the hard work of reform advocates, Clean Slate’s legislative champions, and other supporters over the last two years to make this day possible. This is a milestone in state criminal record-sealing policy that will help hundreds of thousands of people in Michigan and help drive the national conversation on reform forward.”

The bills included in the Clean Slate legislative package are:

- **House Bill 4980:** Creates an automated process for expunging eligible misdemeanors after seven years and eligible non-assaultive felonies after 10 years.
- **HB 4981:** For the first time, makes most convictions for traffic offenses — which constitute half of all criminal cases in Michigan — eligible for expungement.
- **HB 4982:** Creates a process to set aside most marijuana convictions that would have been legal as of Dec. 6, 2018, the date recreational marijuana was legalized in Michigan.

- **HB 4983:** Reduces the waiting period to file a petition to expunge a record of a misdemeanor conviction to three years.
- **HB 4984:** Increases the number of misdemeanors and felonies a person can have expunged to an unlimited number of non-assaultive misdemeanors and up to three felonies — however, a person cannot have more than two assaultive felonies expunged in a lifetime, or have multiple convictions of the same crime expunged if the maximum sentence for that crime is 10 or more years of incarceration
- **HB 4985:** Allows multiple convictions for certain offenses arising on “one bad night” to become eligible for expungement as a single offense.
- **HB 5120:** Creates a rebuttal process for marijuana expungements and specifies that the burden of proof is on prosecutors.

Clean Slate legislation enjoyed a broad base of support, including bill sponsors from both sides of the aisle. It also found advocates from across the political spectrum, with representatives from organizations as diverse as the ACLU of Michigan and the Mackinac Center for Public Policy testifying in favor of it. Safe & Just Michigan worked together with a coalition of partners to advocate for Clean Slate, including numerous business groups, Nation Outside, JLUSA, the Alliance for Safety & Justice, Crime Survivors for Safety & Justice, A.R.R.O., the Detroit Justice Center, Michigan Faith in Action, the Michigan Coalition Against Homelessness, Still Standing Against Domestic Violence, Americans for Prosperity, the Mackinac Center for Public Policy, and the ACLU of Michigan. Special thanks are also due to the Center for American Progress, the Chan Zuckerberg Initiative, the Crime and Justice Institute, Code for America, and the Clean Slate Initiative for the financial support and technical assistance they provided to the Michigan Clean Slate Campaign.

“Clean Slate won such a broad base of support because it’s easy to see how expanding access to expungements is good for everyone,” Cooper said. “It improves people’s lives, while improving economic productivity, our tax base and public safety all at the same time.”

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Safe & Just Michigan ([www.safeandjustmi.org](http://www.safeandjustmi.org)) works to advance policies that end Michigan’s over-use of incarceration and promote community safety and healing. We partner with Michigan organizations and leaders from across the political spectrum, including business and community leaders, faith communities, crime survivor organizations, formerly incarcerated individuals, prisoners and their families, as well as Michigan taxpayers statewide.