December 18, 2025

Senator Anne Carney
Chair
3 State House Station, Room 320
Augusta, ME 04333

Senator Amy Kuhn
Chair
2 State House Station, Room 333
Augusta, ME 04333

Re: Testimony in Support of LD 1911, Clean Slate Maine

Dear Members of the Joint Committee on Judiciary,

As a representative of Maine's small businesses, we urge you to support LD 1911 (Clean Slate), legislation that would automate the process of sealing eligible criminal records for thousands of Mainers. This legislation is a commonsense approach to strengthening Maine's economy and fostering a more resilient small business community.

Small Business Majority is a national small business organization that empowers America's diverse entrepreneurs to build a thriving and equitable economy. Through our network of over 85,000 small businesses — including nearly 300 right here in Maine — we advocate for policy solutions that drive inclusive small business growth. Our perspective is informed by in-depth research and direct engagement with small businesses.

Small businesses are the heart of Maine's economy, representing most businesses in the state. Unfortunately, many small business owners are still struggling to hire and retain a ready workforce. Simultaneously, a quarter of Maine's population has some form of a criminal record, often for minor offenses. Individuals with records often face significant and sometimes lifelong barriers to employment that prevent economic stability and independence. This systemic barrier results in significant losses in earnings for individuals, our businesses, and our state. By automating the sealing of eligible records, Clean Slate legislation would eliminate a needless barrier to employment, all while allowing small business owners to tap into an underutilized workforce.

Beyond filling vacancies, however, Clean Slate is also good for business. Employers who hire justice-impacted workers report that their contributions are comparable — if not superior — to their peers and [83% of small business owners](#) we surveyed agree that Clean Slate policies provide a necessary second chance that directly benefits their recruitment process.

Clean Slate would also create more equitable access to economic opportunities. Many of our neighbors face significant barriers to economic participation. Clean Slate would benefit individuals who are seeking access to better employment and economic opportunities. It would also positively impact Maine's children, since nearly half of U.S. children have at least one parent with a criminal record.

Clean Slate is a popular, bipartisan effort that is backed by the small business community. If passed, it would help local small business owners and expand opportunities for people living with criminal records. It would also keep Maine competitive for years to come. I applaud the sponsors of these bills for their efforts to make Maine an even stronger place for entrepreneurs and small business owners, and I respectfully urge your support of LD 1911.

Sincerely,

Awesta Sarkash
Senior Public Policy Director
Small Business Majority