CENTRAL CITY
CONCERN
HOMES HEALTH JOBS

Chair Kropf; Vice Chair Anderson; Vice Chair Wallan
Representatives Bynum, Chaichi, Conrad, Lewis, Reynolds, Tran, and Yunker;
900 Court Street NE
Salem, OR 97301

February 9, 2024

RE: House Bill 4097

Located in Portland, Oregon, Central City Concern (CCC) provides a comprehensive continuum of affordable housing options integrated with direct social services including health care, recovery, and employment. Flip the Script is a culturally specific program of CCC, designed for African American men and women exiting incarceration. Our purpose is to help our clients rewrite their story with a vision of empowerment and success, rather than hopelessness and a return to prison.

We support House Bill 4097 which corrects technical problems posing barriers to expungement – a vital tool for helping those with a criminal history, reintegrate into their communities after incarceration, and accessing basic needs like employment and housing.

Fines and fees, court costs, supervision fees, and more can have ripple effects lasting decades. This increases the marginalization and isolation justice-involved populations face from many of the services they must engage in to thrive: potential employers, landlords, and government entities. These impacts are in direct opposition to key principles of fairness and justice.

An expungable record left unaddressed due to fines and fees can undermine post-incarceration re-entry goals such as finding stable housing, transportation and employment opportunities. HB 4097 would untie this debt from expungement eligibility.

Expungement provides a vital relief valve from stigma, an impediment to employment and housing opportunities. Unemployment increases the likelihood of recidivism, while employment is positively correlated with successful reintegration.

This bill supports our societal goals of rehabilitation for those who are justice-involved. CCC urges the legislature's support for this package. Thank you for your service to our state.

Respectfully,

Billy Anfield
Advocacy Coordinator, Flip the Script