

News from **Assemblyman Chiaravalloti**



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Cunningham and Chiaravalloti Expungement Reform Bill Package Designed to Help People Reclaim Their Lives Becomes Law

(Trenton)- Legislation sponsored by Senator Sandra Bolden Cunningham and Assemblyman Nicholas Chiaravalloti to help New Jersey residents who have a criminal record were signed into law by the governor today.

"The sooner someone's criminal record is expunged, the sooner he or she can get a fresh start and make positive contributions to society," said Chiaravalloti (D-Hudson). "Expungement reform is a good and necessary change for New Jersey."

"A minor criminal offense should not lead to a lifetime of punishment. These laws are about removing barriers for residents and helping them to overcome the obstacles that exist in finding employment, taking care of their families and setting their lives on the right path," said Senator Cunningham. "These laws are a great step to providing offenders with the second chance they deserve."

The legislation package reforms procedures for expunging criminal records by:

- Allowing a petitioner to expunge up to four, instead of three, offenses or multiple offenses that occurred within a short timeframe, if the petitioner has not been convicted of any prior or subsequent offense;
- Reducing the expungement eligibility waiting period from ten years to six years, following the latest of any conviction, payment of fine and completion of probation, parole or prison sentence;
- Further reducing the expungement eligibility waiting period if satisfaction of a fine or restitution is the petitioner's only remaining barrier and the court finds that the expungement is in the public's interest; and

- Aligning expungement and sentencing statutes, allowing expungement for possession of marijuana with the intent to sell up to one ounce, which is the threshold for a fourth-degree crime.

S-3308 decreases from five to three years the waiting period to expunge an entire juvenile record, maintaining all other requirements and provisions.