

# CLEAN SLATE ACT

*Reps. Lisa Blunt Rochester (D-DE-AL) & Guy Reschenthaler (R-PA-14)*

## Background:

**1 in 3 Americans – over 100 million people – now have some type of criminal record.** The *Clean Slate Act* would automatically seal the records of nonviolent drug crimes and create a brand new and streamlined record sealing process for other qualifying, nonviolent crimes.

Even a minor criminal record can lead to barriers in employment, housing and education. According to the Center for American Progress, roughly **9 in 10 employers, 4 in 5 landlords, and 3 in 5 colleges are now using background checks.** The lifelong barriers associated with having a criminal record are also a significant drain on the national economy; the Center for Economic Policy Research estimated losses as high as \$87 billion to U.S. gross domestic product per year.

Once Americans complete their sentences and demonstrate they have not committed any additional crimes after release, they deserve the opportunity to become productive members of society. By supporting the *Clean Slate Act*, we can give Americans a second chance to live productive and fulfilling lives.

## The Clean Slate Act:

- Automatically seals an individual's federal criminal record if they have been convicted of simple possession or any federal nonviolent offense involving marijuana.
- Creates a new procedure that allows individuals to petition the United States Courts to seal records for nonviolent offenses that are not automatically sealed.
- Requires, within 180 days, automatic sealing of arrest records and other related records for individuals that have been acquitted, exonerated, or never had charges filed against them.
- Authorizes district courts to appoint a public defender to help indigent petitioners file and successfully seal their records.
- Protects employers from liability for any claim arising out of the misconduct of an employee if the misconduct relates to a sealed criminal record.

## The Clean Slate Act Does Not:

- The bill would NOT allow sex offenders to seal their records.
- The bill would NOT allow those convicted of terrorism, treason, or other national security-related offenses to seal their records.
- The bill would NOT allow the sealing of records if those petitioners have been convicted of other violent crimes.

## Endorsed By:

- Center for American Progress, FreedomWorks, and Community Legal Services

