



**TESTIMONY ON HB 2677
HOUSE COMMITTEE ON JUDICIARY
MARCH 11, 2025**

Chair Kropf, Co-Chair Wallan, Co-Chair Chotzen, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Mae Lee Browning, Legislative Director of the Oregon Criminal Defense Lawyers Association. OCDLA supports HB 2677. We are very grateful to Youth, Rights, and Justice for spearheading this work, to the legislators who have championed this legislation over the years, and to Representative Chotzen and Senator Prozanski this session. We are also appreciative of the stakeholders who came together to make sure this process works. HB 2677 completes the three-step legislative process that began with SB 575 in 2021 and SB 519 in 2023.

The expunction process is complicated and expensive for both the state and the youth. Because of that, a very small percentage of youth who qualify to have their records expunged actually go through the process and are successful at getting their records expunged.

Youth face a number of collateral consequences if they are not able to have their records expunged. These consequences can be a barrier to their reentry into the community and the beginning of their adulthood. Such consequences can impact their likelihood to get certain jobs, occupational licenses, entry into college, entry into the military, and housing. Collateral consequences make communities less safe.

Studies show that individuals who are unable to find employment or attend school are more likely to commit crime or recidivate. Furthermore, having a juvenile record is more debilitating to youth of color than their white peers. Science shows that youth are particularly responsive to rehabilitative efforts and that their brains are still developing until their mid-twenties. Youth are capable of rehabilitation.

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¹ OCDLA's 1,200 members statewide include public defense providers, private bar attorneys, investigators, experts, and law students. Our attorneys represent Oregon's children and parents in juvenile dependency proceedings, youth in juvenile delinquency proceedings, adults in criminal proceedings at the trial and the appellate level, as well as civil commitment proceedings throughout the state of Oregon. Our mission is championing justice, promoting individual rights, and supporting the legal defense community through education and advocacy.