



State Representative Alicia Reece  
House District 33

Good Afternoon Chairman Ginter, Vice-Chair Conditt, Ranking Member Boyd and Members of the House Community and Family Advancement Committee. Thank you for the opportunity to present sponsor testimony on House Bill 64, legislation that would automatically expunge official criminal and arrest records in cases where a person's identity was mistaken as the suspect. I am happy to joint sponsor this legislation with Speaker Pro Tempore Kirk Schuring. During the 131<sup>st</sup> General assembly this legislation gained favorable passage in the House with a 93-0 vote.

This legislation was first considered following the 2014 arrest of Charles Belk, an African-American television producer living in Hollywood, California. Mr. Belk was detained for six hours after he was stopped in Beverly Hills for fitting the description of a bank robber and being mistakenly identified as the suspect by a witness. Mr. Belk was later released without charges, and even though he was given notice that he was never formally arrested, an arrest record appeared on the Sheriff's website, and a state legal process had to be started to get the record sealed or destroyed.

Charles Belk channeled his experience into action, founding the nonprofit Fitting the Description, and working to positively affect change across this country. His organization has helped to enact auto-erase legislation into law in four states (North Carolina, Colorado, Illinois, Rhode Island), and have introduced it in 10 others (Michigan, Pennsylvania, Connecticut, South Carolina, Arizona, Wisconsin, Kansas, Nebraska, Missouri, and Tennessee). All legislatures that have passed this bill have done so in a bipartisan manner, and it has been signed by two Republican governors.

Too many individuals are detained, questioned, and even charged for crimes they have not committed simply for fitting the description 'young, black, and male'. This legislation will ensure that those false arrests do not stay with an individual, and acknowledge the mistake that was made by the police in these arrests or detainments should not limit or hang over individuals' futures. Going through a court sealing or expungement of records takes time and resources that

many in our communities don't have, nor do they deserve to have to deal with those barriers because of a case of mistaken identity or profiling by the police.

Again, thank you for your consideration of this important bill that will truly have a profound effect on many in my community, and I welcome any questions you may have.