

My name is Natasha Cooper. I am a survivor of 12 years of human trafficking. I have been out of that life for 6 years. I work for Franklin County Municipal Court for a specialized court docket called Catch Court as a Peer Support Specialist and as Victims Advocate. I also serve as Ambassador for the Ohio Attorney General's office. Where I serve on 4 Major sub-committees. I currently train the Columbus Police Academy on Human Trafficking. I have an 11-year-old daughter and very supportive boyfriend. My parents are very active in my recovery life and support me growing every day. Today I enjoy being a mother and college and a friend. Today I have and today I am 4 years and 12 days clean and sober. Today I understand the tragic impact of human trafficking all around us. My lived experience has help shape my career and interests, which led me to advocate for those victims as they navigate life after being trafficked. Today I provide services to individuals with substance abuse disorders and that are Healing from their Trauma. My passion is being of service, giving hope to those seeking recovery, and supporting individuals on their chosen path of recovery as they are living proof that there is life after trauma. you must be able to secure your future by recognizing that me is serious and collect all the knowledge available to you while still preserving your individuality as you serve your community. "There indeed are a lot of steps that we must climb in life, but one thing that I know for sure is that through hard work, determination and dedication, a clear path to success and personal self -gratification can be fully realized.

Senate Bill 214 is the definition of HOPE to me. This law would make expungement accessible to all human trafficking survivors, regardless of the kind of human trafficking they experienced or where they were trafficked. That is important to me because if I got my record expunged this would help me move forward in life in my life in so many ways, it would help me with Employment, buying a house, gain a sense of pride from not being judged. My daughter won't have to hear about my past record and granting this is showing that we worked hard for this, that forgiveness is a gift. Right now, I am a private sub-contractor for the court through a grant system that would allow me to be not contracted but employed. This is my passion to help others just like me, giving back and being able to share my lived experiences with everyone has helped me and our community and other survivors.

If I was to be granted an expungement it would help me have better access to the public system, not having my expungement has stopped me from employment, places to rent or buy." One time my felony background stopped me from having a job in treatment where I was qualified to work but the background with my felonies stopped me from actually gaining employment, i was denied for only that reason, I was searching for apartments back a year ago, three places denied me because my felonies haven't been long enough. *I was also denied a CQE from my county."*

Because if I don't carry a solicitation or a promoting prostitution charge, after graduating a 2 year program that I now work for called Catch Court and being that when you graduate it is a requirement to receive and as an incentive for graduating the program which I did not receive an expungement because I do not carry those type of charges. i have been on the waiting list for almost three years and today I've been given a chance to share with you who I am and why I need this and why we need this. This is stopping others from using their voices and being able to live their life. I'm grateful for a second chance and second chance programming offering me a chance to be something different than just what my background says. *Right now, you cannot get an expungement if you have not been convicted of soliciting, prostitution, or loitering in Ohio. This leaves out many survivors who were trafficked for labor, who were trafficked away from the streets, who were arrested for these crimes in other states but not Ohio, or who just never got arrested for these kinds of charges because they lived in a place where the police did not patrol for these crimes.*

Thank you very much for taking the time to listen to me and my story, and for taking the time to understand why this is so important. I want you to know that with an expunged of my record, this will allow me and others just like me to be served as a reminder that we did our time for our convictions and now its time for my record to be sealed from the public view allowing view present as my new self without the burden of my past mistakes.. Although I escaped human trafficking 6 years ago, my past haunts me every day.

Thank you,

Natasha Cooper