

By: Representatives Owen, Williams-Barnes,
Jackson, Karriem

To: Judiciary B

COMMITTEE SUBSTITUTE
FOR
HOUSE BILL NO. 122

1 AN ACT TO AMEND SECTION 99-19-71, MISSISSIPPI CODE OF 1972,
2 TO REMOVE THE FIRST OFFENDER RESTRICTIONS FOR MISDEMEANOR
3 EXPUNGEMENT; TO AUTHORIZE EXPUNGEMENT FOR UP TO THREE FELONY
4 CONVICTIONS IF 15 YEARS OR MORE HAVE PASSED SINCE A PERSON'S LAST
5 FELONY CONVICTION; TO PROVIDE RESTRICTIONS FOR SUCH EXPUNGEMENT;
6 AND FOR RELATED PURPOSES.

7 BE IT ENACTED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF MISSISSIPPI:

8 **SECTION 1.** Section 99-19-71, Mississippi Code of 1972, is
9 amended as follows:

10 99-19-71. (1) Any person who has been convicted of a
11 misdemeanor that is not a traffic violation, * * * ~~and who is a~~
12 ~~first offender,~~ may petition the justice, county, circuit or
13 municipal court in which the conviction was had for an order to
14 expunge any such conviction from all public records.

15 (2) (a) * * * ~~Except as otherwise provided in this~~
16 ~~subsection,~~ A person who has been convicted of a felony that is
17 not otherwise excluded by this paragraph, and who has paid all
18 criminal fines and costs of court imposed in the sentence of
19 conviction may petition the court in which the conviction was had
20 for an order to expunge one (1) conviction from all public records



21 five (5) years after the successful completion of all terms and
22 conditions of the sentence for the conviction upon a hearing as
23 determined in the discretion of the court; however, a person is
24 not eligible to expunge a felony classified as:

25 (i) A crime of violence as provided in Section
26 97-3-2;

27 (ii) Arson, first degree as provided in Sections
28 97-17-1 and 97-17-3;

29 (iii) Trafficking in controlled substances as
30 provided in Section 41-29-139;

31 (iv) A third, fourth or subsequent offense DUI as
32 provided in Section 63-11-30(2)(c) and (2)(d);

33 (v) Felon in possession of a firearm as provided
34 in Section 97-37-5;

35 (vi) Failure to register as a sex offender as
36 provided in Section 45-33-33;

37 (vii) Voyeurism as provided in Section 97-29-61;

38 (viii) Witness intimidation as provided in Section
39 97-9-113;

40 (ix) Abuse, neglect or exploitation of a
41 vulnerable person as provided in Section 43-47-19; or

42 (x) Embezzlement as provided in Sections 97-11-25
43 and 97-23-19.

44 A person is eligible for only one (1) felony expunction under
45 this paragraph, unless the provisions of paragraph (b) of this



subsection applies. For the purposes of this section, the terms "one (1) conviction" and "one (1) felony expunction" mean and include all convictions that arose from a common nucleus of operative facts as determined in the discretion of the court.

(b) A person may have up to three (3) felony convictions expunged if the person: (i) has successfully completed all terms and conditions of the sentences for the convictions for which he or she seeks to expunge, (ii) has paid all criminal fines and costs of the court imposed in the sentences for each conviction that he or she seeks to expunge, (iii) has not been convicted of any other felony not less than fifteen (15) years since the person's last felony conviction, and (iv) does not seek to expunge a felony conviction that is excluded from expungement by paragraph (a) of this subsection (2). The terms "one (1) conviction" and "one (1) felony expunction" means the same as they are defined in subsection (2)(a) of this section.

(* * *~~b~~c) The petitioner shall give ten (10) days' written notice to the district attorney before any hearing on the petition. In all cases, the court wherein the petition is filed may grant the petition if the court determines, on the record or in writing, that the applicant is rehabilitated from the offenses which * * *~~is~~ are the subject of the petition. In those cases where the court denies the petition, the findings of the court in this respect shall be identified specifically and not generally.



70 (3) Upon entering an order of expunction under this section,
71 a nonpublic record thereof shall be retained by the Mississippi
72 Criminal Information Center solely for the purpose of determining
73 whether, in subsequent proceedings, the person is a first
74 offender. The order of expunction shall not preclude a district
75 attorney's office from retaining a nonpublic record thereof for
76 law enforcement purposes only. The existence of an order of
77 expunction shall not preclude an employer from asking a
78 prospective employee if the employee has had an order of
79 expunction entered on his behalf. The effect of the expunction
80 order shall be to restore the person, in the contemplation of the
81 law, to the status he occupied before any arrest or indictment for
82 which convicted. No person as to whom an expunction order has
83 been entered shall be held thereafter under any provision of law
84 to be guilty of perjury or to have otherwise given a false
85 statement by reason of his failure to recite or acknowledge such
86 arrest, indictment or conviction in response to any inquiry made
87 of him for any purpose other than the purpose of determining, in
88 any subsequent proceedings under this section, whether the person
89 is a first offender. A person as to whom an order has been
90 entered, upon request, shall be required to advise the court, in
91 camera, of the previous conviction and expunction in any legal
92 proceeding wherein the person has been called as a prospective
93 juror. The court shall thereafter and before the selection of the



94 jury advise the attorneys representing the parties of the previous
95 conviction and expunction.

96 (4) Upon petition therefor, a justice, county, circuit or
97 municipal court shall expunge the record of any case in which an
98 arrest was made, the person arrested was released and the case was
99 dismissed or the charges were dropped or there was no disposition
100 of such case, or the person was found not guilty at trial.

101 (5) No public official is eligible for expunction under this
102 section for any conviction related to his official duties.

103 **SECTION 2.** This act shall take effect and be in force from
104 and after July 1, 2021.

