

119TH CONGRESS  
1ST SESSION

**S.** \_\_\_\_\_

To establish a grant program for States for purposes of modernizing criminal justice data infrastructure to facilitate automatic record expungement and sealing, and for other purposes.

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IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

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Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Ms. BLUNT ROCHESTER) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on

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**A BILL**

To establish a grant program for States for purposes of modernizing criminal justice data infrastructure to facilitate automatic record expungement and sealing, and for other purposes.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Fresh Start Act of  
5       2025”.

6       **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS.**

7       In this Act:

1           (1) TERMS DEFINED IN OMNIBUS CRIME CON-  
2           TROL AND SAFE STREETS ACT OF 1968.—Terms de-  
3           fined in section 901 of title I of the Omnibus Crime  
4           Control and Safe Streets Act of 1968 (34 U.S.C.  
5           10251) shall have the meanings given those terms in  
6           that section.

7           (2) OTHER TERMS.—

8           (A) AUTOMATIC.—The term “automatic”  
9           means, with regard to the expungement or seal-  
10          ing of a criminal record, that the expungement  
11          or sealing occurs without the State requiring  
12          any action from the eligible individual.

13          (B) COVERED EXPUNGEMENT LAW.—The  
14          term “covered expungement law” means a law  
15          of a State providing for the automatic  
16          expungement or sealing, subject to such re-  
17          quirements as the State may impose, of a crimi-  
18          nal record of an individual.

19   **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF GRANT PROGRAM.**

20          (a) IN GENERAL.—The Attorney General may make  
21          not more than 1 grant under this Act to each eligible  
22          State.

23          (b) AMOUNT.—A grant described in subsection (a)  
24          shall be in an amount of not more than \$5,000,000.

1       (c) ELIGIBILITY.—A State shall be eligible for a  
2 grant under this Act if—

3           (1) the State has in effect a covered  
4 expungement law;

5           (2) the covered expungement law of the State  
6 provides that expungement or sealing of a criminal  
7 record shall not be delayed by reason of a failure to  
8 pay a fee or fine; and

9           (3) the State submits an application to the At-  
10 torney General containing such information as the  
11 Attorney General may require, including, at a min-  
12 imum—

13               (A) information identifying whether a sys-  
14 tem exists, as of the date of the application, for  
15 record expungement or sealing in the State;

16               (B) a description of how infrastructure  
17 created through grant funding will facilitate  
18 automatic record expungement or sealing for in-  
19 dividuals eligible for record expungement or  
20 sealing; and

21               (C) an identification of the anticipated  
22 number of individuals who would benefit from  
23 the implementation of automatic record  
24 expungement or sealing infrastructure.

**1 SEC. 4. USE OF GRANT AMOUNTS.**

2 A State shall use a grant received under section 3  
3 to implement a covered expungement law in accordance  
4 with the following requirements:

5 (1) The State shall use not more than 10 per-  
6 cent of the grant for research or planning for crimi-  
7 nal record data infrastructure improvements that  
8 will make criminal record expungement or sealing  
9 automatic.

10 (2) The State shall use any remaining amounts  
11 to implement criminal record data infrastructure im-  
12 provements that will make criminal record  
13 expungement or sealing automatic.

14 (3) The portion of the costs of implementing  
15 the law provided by a grant under this section may  
16 not exceed 75 percent.

**17 SEC. 5. REPORTING REQUIREMENTS.**

18 (a) IN GENERAL.—A State receiving a grant under  
19 section 3 shall report to the Attorney General, each year  
20 of the grant term, pursuant to guidelines established by  
21 the Attorney General, information regarding the following:

22 (1) The number of individuals eligible for auto-  
23 matic expungement or sealing under the covered  
24 expungement law of the State, disaggregated by  
25 race, ethnicity, and gender.

1           (2) The number of individuals whose records  
2           have been expunged or sealed annually since the en-  
3           actment of the covered expungement law of the  
4           State, disaggregated by race, ethnicity, and gender.

5           (3) The number of individuals who have sub-  
6           mitted an application for expungement or sealing  
7           under the covered expungement law of the State  
8           that is still pending, disaggregated by race, eth-  
9           nicity, and gender.

10          (b) INACCESSIBILITY OF DATA FOR REPORTING.—If  
11          a State is unable to compile and report elements of the  
12          data on expungement and sealing required to be reported  
13          under subsection (a) during any year of the grant term,  
14          the State shall develop and report, not later than the last  
15          day of that year, a comprehensive plan to obtain as much  
16          of the unavailable data as possible.

17          (c) PUBLICATION.—Not later than 1 year after the  
18          date of enactment of this Act, and each year thereafter,  
19          the Attorney General shall make available to the public  
20          a report containing the data reported to the Attorney Gen-  
21          eral under this section.

22          **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

23          There are authorized to be appropriated \$50,000,000  
24          for each of fiscal years 2026 through 2030 to carry out  
25          this Act.