

May 21, 2025

The Honorable Pete Flores
Chair
Senate Committee on Criminal Justice
Sam Houston Building, Room 470
Austin, TX 78701

The Honorable Tan Parker
Vice Chair
Senate Committee on Criminal Justice
Sam Houston Building, Room 470
Austin, TX 78701

RE: Support of House Bill 2507 (companion to SB 814), Relating to automatic orders of nondisclosure of criminal history record information for certain misdemeanor defendants following successful completion of a period of deferred adjudication community supervision.

Dear Chair Flores, Vice-Chair Parker, and Members of the Committee:

As a representative of Texas' 3.3 million small businesses, Small Business Majority writes today in support of HB 2507, legislation that would automatically grant nondisclosure orders for certain misdemeanor defendants who complete deferred adjudication and eliminating associated fees. Our [2023 scientific poll](#) of Texas small businesses found that a robust 83% of respondents agree that Clean Slate policies will open a pool of job applicants that deserve a second chance, benefiting small businesses in their efforts to hire and recruit employees.

Small Business Majority is a small business organization that empowers diverse entrepreneurs to build a thriving and equitable economy. We engage our network of more than 85,000 small businesses and 1,500 business and community organizations to advocate for public policy solutions and deliver resources to entrepreneurs that promote equitable small business growth.

We hear daily from small business owners in our network that they are struggling to attract and retain talented employees in this tight labor market. Meanwhile more than 70 million Americans have a criminal record, limiting their opportunities to earn a living wage, start a new business and contribute to society. Even a minor criminal record can create a wall of lifelong barriers that prevent gainful employment.

In 2015, SB 1902 (Perry) was signed into law, which sought to reduce recidivism, increase public safety, and allow millions of Texans a chance to provide for themselves and their families through increasing access to orders of nondisclosure (OND), also known as criminal record sealing. Since its enactment, data provided by the Department of Public Safety (DPS) shows successful safety outcomes — among people who have obtained a nondisclosure in Texas, less than 1% were subsequently convicted of a violent felony. However, one provision of the bill created a petition-less process for qualifying dismissed misdemeanor cases, but the technology and infrastructure did not exist at the time for the intended process to be fully realized.

HB 2506 creates the mechanism to fully implement the current OND eligibility criteria already adopted by the legislature under SB 1902 of the 84th legislative session. Through system-actor coordination and alignment, DPS will electronically identify eligible records in the statewide database and provide notice to the applicable clerk of court on a monthly, recurring basis. This will help ensure individuals who meet specific criteria reintegrate into society, strengthening the workforce which small businesses desperately need. What's more, Texas small business owners are supportive of state and federal policies that improve hiring chances for justice-impacted individuals. A robust 74% support legislation that would allow individuals to petition federal courts to seal or expunge certain records.

We urge the Committee to pass HB 2507 immediately.

Sincerely,

Awesta Sarkash
Public Policy Director
Small Business Majority

CC: Lt. Governor Dan Patrick