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Safe & Just
Michigan

Detroit Pistons' Second Chance Summit puts 168 on the path to expungement

Clearing criminal records opens doors to housing, jobs for MI residents

DETROIT — Nearly 170 people stepped toward a new future on Friday, March 1, by starting their expungement process at Second Chance Summit held at the Little Caesar's Arena. Hosted by the Detroit Pistons and co-sponsored by the National Basketball Social Justice Coalition, Safe & Just Michigan, the City of Detroit, the Michigan Attorney General's Office, Project Clean Slate, U.S Attorney's Office for the Eastern District of Michigan, the summit provided free and low-cost legal help to people eligible to have old criminal records cleared under Michigan's Clean Slate expungement laws. Several community partners, including universities, nonprofits and employers were also on hand to provide attendees with resources and job opportunities.

"Record expungement will not only give these Michiganders a fresh start, but options for stable housing and employment," said **John S. Cooper**, executive director of Safe & Just Michigan. "Past mistakes shouldn't result in a lifetime of barriers. Expungement is not only the right thing to do, it's good for our state's residents, communities and economy."

The bipartisan passage of Clean Slate Laws in 2020 in Michigan expanded expungement eligibility to more than 1 million residents, with thousands more qualifying for automatic expungement. The fair provided residents with information on their records, as well as free legal counsel and necessary next steps. So far, more than 1,175,764 Michiganders have had their records either completely or partially automatically expunged. Thousands more are undergoing steps to clear theirs, including the 168 people who sought help at the Second Chances Summit on Friday.

Pontiac resident **Anthony Simpson** said he was there to clear old items off his record that he incurred many years ago. He urged others in his position to consider doing the same. “When I was young, I made some bad mistakes. But as I got older, I got wiser, and that past should not be held against me.” he said. “If you can get an expungement, go for it. It may open up a lot of opportunities for you.”

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Safe & Just Michigan (www.safeandjustmi.org) works to advance policies that end Michigan’s over-use of incarceration and promote community safety and healing. We partner with Michigan organizations and leaders from across the political spectrum, including business and community leaders, faith communities, crime survivor organizations, formerly incarcerated individuals, prisoners and their families, as well as Michigan taxpayers statewide.