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News Release

They've Done Their Time; Let Them Move on from Crime: Senator Pate Introduces Criminal Records Reform Bill

OTTAWA, FEBRUARY 20, 2018—Senator Kim Pate today introduced legislation to remove barriers that punish and exacerbate obstacles for those who have completed their sentences and are working to successfully integrate into the community. In the absence of government action on its commitments to review the criminal record system, Senator Pate's bill builds on the findings of recent government and legislative work regarding the impediments criminal records pose to rehabilitation and community integration.

In recent years, increased fees and red tape have reduced the number of those applying for criminal record suspensions [by some 40%](#). In addition, public consultations, parliamentary committee work, as well as ministerial, Parole Board of Canada and other government representatives, have underscored the need for legislative action.

- [Public Safety Minister Ralph Goodale](#) identified the current \$631 fee as “punitive measure” in need of change.
- [Parole Board of Canada](#) public consultations have demonstrated that Canadians agree and are concerned about an application process so complex that it constitutes further punishment.
- the [Standing Committee on Public Safety and National Security](#) urged the government to “review record suspension fees, and fee structure, ... the complexity of the record suspension process, ... [and] examine a mechanism to make record suspensions automatic in specific and appropriate circumstances.”

“This bill aims to assist those who have been held accountable for their actions, fulfilled all aspects of their sentence, and are trying to move on with their lives,” said Kim Pate, the sponsor of the bill. “We propose that the cost savings from removing unnecessary bureaucracy could be used to eliminate fees. Suspensions to not remove records and current fees are exorbitant for most. The result is that we are preventing people from being able to move on with their lives and make positive contributions to our communities.”

Senator Pate will speak to this legislation in Chamber in the coming days.