

From: [Arellano, Joey](mailto:Arellano_Joey)
To: [Press](#)
Subject: FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Florida House Democrats React to Shocking Veto
Date: Thursday, July 1, 2021 3:25:36 PM

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 1, 2021

CONTACT

Joey Arellano
Deputy Communications Director
House Democratic Office
joey.arellano@myfloridahouse.gov
850-717-4943

Florida House Democrats React to Shocking Veto

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. – In a major setback to criminal justice reform in the state of Florida, [SB 274](#) was vetoed by the Governor on Tuesday, effectively preventing thousands of juvenile Floridians from having their criminal records expunged upon completion of a behavioral program. Florida House Democrats offer the following statements in response.

“I was saddened to see the Governor veto an opportunity for youthful offenders to have a second chance at life. We’ve all made mistakes and it’s important that we allow grace and redemption to be a part of the rehabilitation process in our criminal justice system,” said **Representative Dianne Hart (D-Tampa)**.

“The Governor’s reasoning behind the veto of this bill is confusing since the discretion to expunge records would fall on the law enforcement officer responding to the minor’s crime or the state attorney. It does not make any sense to veto a bill that passed with unanimous, bipartisan support, and not a single ‘nay’ vote. The amount of minors in this state that would have benefited from this greatly outweighs the so-called “risks” with implementing the bill. I’m gravely disappointed that the Governor has decided to continue holding up barriers for minors who have made mistakes in their past and make good faith efforts to reclaim their futures,” said **Co-Leader Bobby DuBose (D-Ft. Lauderdale)**.

“It’s sad that the Governor vetoed SB 274, which was meaningful juvenile justice reform legislation to come out of the 2021 Session. Legislators in both chambers worked very hard on bipartisan legislation to simplify the process for Floridians to have their juvenile records sealed. However, the executive branch veto has delayed the State’s efforts in moving a step closer to implementing the long overdue changes our juvenile justice system needs,” said **Representative Ramon Alexander (D-Tallahassee)**.

“Mistakes that were made when you were younger should not follow you for the rest of your life. SB 274 was crafted with strong bipartisan support in order to give a second chance to our youth who truly deserve it. The Florida Legislature was united on this bill because we all want children to succeed. I am saddened Governor DeSantis chose to veto this legislation and take away that chance,” said **Representative Fentrice Driskell (D-Tampa)**.

###