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## **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Representative Grieco Files Bill to Expand Access to Sealing and Expunction of Criminal and Injunction Cases**

**Tallahassee, FL – Representative Michael Grieco (D-Miami Beach)**, Ranking Minority Member of the House Subcommittee on Criminal Justice and Public Safety and a criminal defense attorney, filed [HB841](#) today to expand access to sealing criminal and civil injunction cases.

Currently in Florida, if a defendant's case is dismissed, abandoned by the State, or results in an acquittal, they can have the record sealed, preventing access and its use for most purposes. Unfortunately, applicants can only do this once, when the equitable thing would be to never prevent the sealing of a dismissed case, no matter how many there are. This bill would eliminate the cap on the number of cases one can seal. Additionally, **HB841** will provide further expunction mechanisms for juveniles and requires FDLE to process sealing/expungement within six (6) months.

Lastly, **HB841** would allow the respondent of a domestic violence injunction to seal the petition if it is dismissed, withdrawn, or if the Court rules in his/her favor.

**Representative Grieco** states, "In my 20-plus years in the criminal justice system I have seen injustice, but I have also seen courthouse injustice impact exonerated defendants for years and decades after accusations. If a case is dismissed, a defendant should be made whole and not have an unsubstantiated arrest or accusation burden them as they seek employment or housing. The system is designed to punish the guilty and protect the innocent, and equity demands that if one is innocent until proven guilty a simple accusation should not follow them around for the rest of their lives."

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