**The Youth Equality and Reintegration Act (The YEAR Act)**

**This is the YEAR for Equality in Juvenile Records Reform**

2014: In a vote of 145-1, the Legislature passed SHB 1651, the Youth Opportunities Act (YOA) to expand the process to seal juvenile records. Allowing youth to move on from past mistakes and have a second chance through juvenile record sealing reflects our core values: **fairness, equality, and opportunity.**

**The YOA Was A Victory For Many, But Left Low-Income Youth Behind:**

⇒ One barrier remains to making record sealing equally accessible to all youth: legal financial obligations (LFOs).

⇒ Courts must hold hearings for automatic record sealing once the youth completes all community supervision, is released from confinement or parole, and pays all LFOs.

⇒ **But low-income youth who cannot pay their LFOs cannot get their juvenile records sealed. So rich kids can seal while poor kids cannot.**

**The YEAR Act Will Help Low-income Youth Seal Their Records By:**

⇒ Refocusing LFO requirements on **compensating victims.**

⇒ Giving judges discretion to consider the youth’s **ability to pay** when ordering restitution.

⇒ Affording youth the opportunity to get a record sealed after making a **good faith effort** to pay restitution and after fulfilling all other probation requirements.

⇒ Allowing youth to **still be held accountable** through a **civil judgment** after the record is sealed.

**The YEAR Act allows all youth, regardless of their socio-economic status, to pursue gainful employment, obtain affordable housing, and access equal education.**