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News Release

We All Benefit When People Can Move on From Crime: Senate Debates Criminal Record Expiry

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

OTTAWA, FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2025— Late yesterday, Senator Kim Pate called for urgent action regarding criminal record reform as she launched debate on Bill S-207, which proposes that criminal records expire for those who have lived a number of years in the community with no further convictions.

The bill builds on previous government actions, is evidence-driven, and based on a body of research indicating that records are too often insurmountable obstacles to the essentials like housing and jobs that people need to integrate successfully into their communities. The previous version of this bill (S-212 in the last session of Parliament) died on the order paper after full study at the Standing Senate Committee on Legal and Constitutional Affairs.

In Ontario, recent work to assist community members to apply for record suspensions commenced by Nishnawbe Aski Legal Services, in partnership with the Ontario Provincial Police, has highlighted how the current application system adds to the burdens on those most marginalized, as well as on governments to administer applications, and on courts and police responsible for multiple record checks. Access to record expiry could free up time, personnel and financial resources that could be redirected to better assist people and communities.

“Bill S-207 could allow us to build up communities where all are empowered to contribute, instead of spending money maintaining an unjust, ineffective and punitive criminal record system,” said Senator Pate. “It would represent an important and meaningful step toward safer, more just and more cohesive communities, not only for those in urgent need of relief from a criminal record, but for all Canadians.”

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Bill background: <https://senpate.sencanada.ca/en/current-work/s-207-criminal-record-expiry/>

To view Senator Pate’s speech on Bill S-207:

<https://senparlvu.parl.gc.ca/Harmony/en/PowerBrowser/PowerBrowserV2/20251002/-1/14405?mediaStartTime=20251002152300&viewMode=3&globalStreamId=16>