

HOUSE No. 371

Bill accompanying the petition of Freeman O. Emerson and others for legislation relative to testimony as to records of convictions of crimes. Joint Judiciary. January 6.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

In the Year One Thousand Nine Hundred and Thirteen.

AN ACT

Relative to Testimony as to Convictions of Crimes.

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives in General Court assembled, and by the authority of the same, as follows:

1 SECTION 1. The record of a conviction of an offence
2 shall not be produced in court or used before any com-
3 mission or other tribunal after the lapse of fifteen years
4 from the date of the expiration of imprisonment there-
5 for, and the person convicted shall not be required to
6 testify as to such conviction, nor shall any evidence re-
7 lating thereto be offered, unless there has been a subse-
8 quent conviction of such person within a period of fifteen
9 years prior to the time when such evidence is offered.

1 SECTION 2. After the lapse of fifteen years from the
2 termination of the period of imprisonment after convic-
3 tion, as aforesaid, the statement or representation of any

4 person orally or by writing, print, or in any other man-
5 ner, of the fact of such conviction and sentence shall
6 subject the person making such statement or representa-
7 tion to the same liability for damages in an action of
8 slander or libel by the person so accused, as would exist
9 if such statement or representation were false, and the
10 truth of such statement or representation shall not be
11 pleaded or offered in evidence by the defendant in such
12 action, unless there has been a subsequent conviction of
13 such person within a period of fifteen years next pre-
14 ceding the making of such statement or representation.

1 SECTION 3. This act shall take effect upon its passage.