



MINNESOTA
ASSOCIATION OF VERBATIM
REPORTERS & CAPTIONERS

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Dear Judicial Partners,

We are writing to ask for your support on behalf of the Minnesota Association of Verbatim Reporters & Captioners.

At the November 17, 2016 Minnesota Judicial Council meeting, presentations were made on behalf of the State of Utah and Hennepin County's CourtSmart Remote Monitoring office to persuade the Judicial Council to replace "live" court reporters with remote digital recordings. As a result of those presentations, the Judicial Council appointed a Workgroup to evaluate the exploration of cost effective and efficient ways to create and maintain the court record. Those areas include judicial branch control of the court record, potential changes in the manner in which transcripts are created and the priorities for which court proceedings should be created either by an in-person and/or real-time court reporter and by digital monitoring. The digital recordings of courtrooms would consist of several courtrooms being monitored from a remote location.

As many of you are aware, Hennepin County has been utilizing mass courtroom digital recording for approximately 10-12 years. Stenographers are primarily used on a priority basis according to case assignment. This results in there not being enough stenographers to cover all the preferred cases where a steno reporter is required, thus resulting in electronic recording of cases that are considered a steno priority. In many instances, murder cases and complex civil litigation are electronically recorded. Other concerns being expressed by trial attorneys who have experienced CourtSmart are turnaround time and accuracy of transcripts, and missing testimony. These are just a few examples of an exhausting list of concerns involving mass electronic recording that are too numerous to list. If you have any experiences or comments you have regarding any of these issues with electronic recordings, we encourage you to share them with MAVRC.

We need your support to stand up for the record on behalf of your client and any person who uses the judicial system in the State of Minnesota. We believe the integrity of the record is at stake.

MAVRC has formed a subcommittee of court reporters from around the state to compile information in support of maintaining the stenographic record as it is the most accurate, efficient, timely and cost effective way of preserving the record.

We are asking if you could please write a letter or if you would be willing to make a presentation to the Judicial Council in opposition of replacing stenographers and "live" reporters with remote recording equipment.

For more information on where to send letters and/or to work with MAVRC in making a presentation to Judicial Council, please contact MAVRC's President, Sharon Steinbrecher, at mavrc.pres@hotmail.com or call 763-323-5931. We will also be posting updates on our MAVRC website, www.MAVRC.org under the "Hot Topics" tab.

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We sincerely appreciate any support you can provide, and thank you for your time.

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