



*American Association of Electronic Reporters & Transcribers, Inc.*

23 July 2014

Marla S. Moore,  
Director  
Judicial Council of Georgia  
Administrative Office of the Courts  
244 Washington Street, SW Suite 300  
Atlanta, GA 30334

**RE: SUPPORT FOR REPORTER RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE JUDICIAL COUNCIL OF  
GEORGIA COURT REPORTING MATTERS COMMITTEE**

Dear Ms. Moore:

On behalf of the American Association of Electronic Reporters and Transcribers (AAERT), I would like to voice our strong support for the recommendations by the Judicial Council of Georgia's Court Reporting Matters Committee and in particular "Section 3.1 Digital Recording."

AAERT is dedicated to the creation and protection of a true and accurate verbatim record. Our Association has long held that AAERT certified reporters and transcribers, utilizing digital recording systems according to Best Practices as developed by our Association, can produce accurate, timely verbatim records at substantial savings over older and more expensive methods of making the official record.

As referenced in the Committee's report, electronic reporting is an accepted method of reporting in an increasing number of states as well as on the federal level. Electronic court reporting has been used very successfully for decades and has proven itself to be a reliable, accurate, and cost effective method. The number of certified stenographic reporters (as well as the number of stenographic schools and graduating students) has been in sharp decline in recent years, according to the NCRA's own numbers and as presented in the "2013 Court Survey" at the AAERT Owners Conference held on March 7, 2014 (See reference below). Meanwhile, AAERT's nationwide certification and continuing education programs for both digital court reporters and transcribers ensures that professional digital electronic court reporters and transcribers are available to deliver an accurate and timely verbatim record.

In addition to the COSCA report referenced in the committee's recommendations, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) just last fall released their report on "Making the Record Utilizing Digital Electronic Recording," which outlines in detail the framework for successfully using digital court reporting in a courtroom system. This report in conjunction with the AAERT Best Practices Guide (see table of contents attached) provides a ready-made blueprint for the implementation of the Committee's recommendations to allow digital electronic reporting in the courts. In accordance with our Best Practices Guide, AAERT recommends the presence of



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an AAERT certified court reporter in the courtroom to support the judge and produce a complete, accurate record of the proceeding.

With regard to "Recommendation 3.1 Electronic/Digital Reporting, The Judicial Council shall recognize electronic/digital reporting as a means of personal verbatim reporting and direct the Board of Court Reporting to develop rules and regulations for certification of court reporters using electronic/digital methods by January 1, 2015," AAERT would be pleased to work with the Board to help develop these rules and regulations. In addition, we would strongly recommend that Georgia's Board of Court Reporting should include certified members of all three methods: stenography, voice writing, and digital electronic court reporting.

Advancements in technology have made it possible for digital reporters to securely stream recordings and notes directly to a waiting transcription pool which in turn delivers back the verbatim transcript within a "near-realtime" delivery period. The use of realtime in court, while valuable in a few situations, is the exception and not the rule. Certified realtime reporters are difficult to find and expensive to use. Digital electronic reporting provides a cost-effective alternative with a rapid turn-around of complete and accurate final transcripts.

Digital electronic reporting is the optimal solution to balancing the demands of the current budgetary situation with the need to provide a fair and accessible legal system to all of the state's citizens. Adopting the recommendations of the Court Reporters Committee to recognize digital electronic reporting as a viable method of making the record, and allowing courts to utilize that method on a large scale, would represent a significant cost savings to the state, while providing accurate verbatim records in a more timely manner.

If you have any questions or require any additional information please do not hesitate to contact us. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Buchanan Ewing", is written over the typed name.

Buchanan Ewing  
President  
buck.ewing@aaert.org

NCSC, Making the Record Utilizing Digital Electronic Recording:

[http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.aaert.org/resource/resmgr/docs/digital\\_recording\\_paper\\_fina.pdf](http://c.ymcdn.com/sites/www.aaert.org/resource/resmgr/docs/digital_recording_paper_fina.pdf)

"2013 Court Survey" at AAERT Owners Conference: [https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/aaert.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/Files/Court\\_Survey\\_Summary0314.pdf](https://c.ymcdn.com/sites/aaert.site-ym.com/resource/resmgr/Files/Court_Survey_Summary0314.pdf)

cc: Richard Russell, Chairman, Government Relations Committee