



For Immediate Release

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California's Supreme Court Delivers a Devastating Blow to Low-Income Litigants

The Court's Decision Allowing for the Expansion of Electronic Recordings in Proceedings Puts Justice at Risk for Thousands of Californians

Los Angeles - The Los Angeles County Court Reporters Association (LACCRA) today expressed dismay following the California Supreme Court's decision in *Family Violence Appellate Project, et al. v. Superior Courts*. While we respect the Court's decision and its effort to ensure that indigent litigants have access to an official verbatim record, LACCRA believes the opinion leaves significant implementation questions unanswered and may have far-reaching consequences for how official records are created throughout California's trial courts.

"Today's decision creates the potential for two different standards of preserving the official record in civil cases," said LACCRA President Shanna Gray. "Litigants who retain a licensed court reporter receive a transcript certified by a trained professional who is individually accountable for its accuracy. Others may rely on electronic recording, where many important questions about implementation, oversight, and accountability remain unresolved."

LACCRA, representing some 340 court reporters in Los Angeles County courts, challenged the premise of the suit, which relied on a flawed data analysis to contend that courts are unable to hire enough court reporters for all courtrooms.

"For years, county courts have spread the narrative that there aren't enough court reporters in order to justify replacing us with electronic recording," said Gray. "Interest in court reporting as a career has surged thanks to recent state investment and new pathways to licensure."

Those efforts include a \$30 million ongoing investment in recruitment and retention made by the state Legislature, as well as the authorization of voice writing as a licensed reporting method. In addition, the legislature has expanded reciprocity through nationally recognized testing standards and authorized a Remote Reporting Pilot designed to improve coverage for participating courts without sacrificing transcript quality. These efforts are producing measurable results. The number of newly licensed court reporters have increased from 37 in 2021 to 359 in 2025—an increase of nearly 900 percent.

California is making meaningful progress in rebuilding its court reporter workforce. As that progress continues, LACCRA hopes this decision will not undermine the momentum created

through legislative investments, innovative recruitment efforts, and expanded pathways to licensure. We continue to believe that the best protection for the official record is a licensed court reporter who is present throughout the proceedings and individually accountable for the transcript. Every Californian deserves that standard including in civil proceedings. LACCRA will continue to fight for increased access to justice for all California litigants and remains proud of its efforts to grow this vital profession.

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